



## A Message from Archbishop Lori on the McCarrick Report

Nov. 10, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Earlier today, the Vatican released its report on the investigation of the former Cardinal, now Mr. Theodore McCarrick. While it will take some time to thoroughly read and digest the full report, which is more than 450 pages long, I join Archbishop José F. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and all bishops throughout the country, in offering as soon as possible an acknowledgement of the pain this report brings to the faithful, and most especially to those who have suffered abuse by a member of the clergy.

While the release of the report brings us to another moment of painful awareness of our Church's past failures, it also marks a new era of transparency in our Church which the lay faithful have rightly demanded. Pope Francis personally called for the investigation into the systemic failures that allowed Mr. McCarrick to rise through the ranks of the Church's hierarchy, and he promised that the results of the investigation would be made known. Now that he has fulfilled that promise, not only are we reminded of the shocking misconduct of Mr. McCarrick, but we must also examine together the profound failings both of individual Church leaders and of a system that served to protect, rather than expose, someone against whom there were repeated allegations of inappropriate and egregious sexual misconduct. The report exposes the entrenched clericalism at every level of the Church that enabled Mr. McCarrick to serve at one of the highest levels of authority. It likewise outlines the failure of leaders in the Church who knew of Mr. McCarrick's misconduct and neglected to intervene as he was elevated to and maintained his status as a cardinal.

While the contents of the report are painful, I am grateful that this information has finally come fully to light, and especially grateful to the victim-survivors who came forward, to those who persisted in demanding an investigation into their allegations, and to those who took appropriate action to answer those demands. I am likewise grateful to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for initiating this investigation and for enacting the strongest-possible sanctions against Mr. McCarrick, who was laicized in January of 2019.

Recognizing that this report serves as a painful reminder of past harms, I wish most of all to offer again my humble and sincere apologies to anyone who has suffered abuse or harassment by a member of the clergy. As I have in the past, I offer the Church's pastoral support, as well as the opportunity to meet with me or our other bishops, to any survivor who might find that helpful.

You may also recall that earlier this year, in an effort to prevent this abuse of power from happening again in the Church, and in response to Pope Francis' call for a universal and transparent system for reporting allegations against bishops, the U.S. bishops put into place a third-party reporting system, [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org), for reporting sexual misconduct against children or vulnerable adults, or interference in an investigation by a bishop. The Archdiocese of Baltimore has implemented policies that exceed these minimum requirements, including the creation of an independent, third-party system for reporting incidents of harassment and other misconduct, which can be accessed [here](#).

At a time when you, dear faithful, have had to endure so much suffering and anguish due to the worldwide pandemic, economic pressures, civil unrest and the ugly specter of racism, my heart truly aches to think that your Church could be a further occasion of pain and trauma. I pray that your relationship with our savior Jesus Christ, who will never fail us, and His presence in the sacraments, will bring you comfort. I pray too that the Holy Spirit will lead you to a deeper recognition of your own role as a missionary disciple in the Church, and as an agent in helping to guide us to ever greater transparency, accountability and renewal. I welcome your involvement as we continue this work together.

Let us take comfort in the words of St. Paul: "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William E. Lori". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.