



+ November 9, 2020

Dear Pastoral Leaders,

As many of you are aware, the Vatican will be releasing its McCarrick report tomorrow at 5 a.m. PT. The report is expected to be *very* lengthy and will reveal the findings of the Vatican investigation about the defrocked former cardinal. I have not been privy to any summary or executive overview of it – nor have any of our bishops. The Holy See will drive all communications around this report, and we should all refrain from any comments or statements about the report itself.

Every time something of this gravity comes to light, it disturbs our people. This report will undoubtedly stir up similar feelings and frustrations – not only for them, but for us as pastoral leaders too. As painful as this report will be, it is important and necessary. The fact that the Vatican has taken 30 months to do this investigation into the file itself is a sign that the Church is making progress. Pope Francis is looking hard and deep at the things that were and the things that need to change to purify the Church. This report gives me hope that the Catholic Church is entering a new phase of transparency and a new era of healing.

You will most likely get questions from your parishioners. This is an opportunity to remind people of how we have responded to this crisis. Here in the Archdiocese of Seattle, we have a commitment to transparency and action that each of us must uphold. I encourage you to echo this sentiment to your parishioners. The [Protect & Heal website](#) provides transparency and education about the abuse crisis in the Archdiocese of Seattle. The website provides details about our own abuse history, our commitment to action, the public list of those credibly accused, the role of the Archdiocesan Review Board, the new Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service, and our financials tied to abuse case settlements.

I want people to know that we are not hiding from our past. We encourage people to come forward so that they can find healing, and we offer a robust victim assistance program for them. Our faithful should also know the archdiocese began addressing abuse prevention in the 1980s, has opened its confidential clergy files to outside organizations for review on two different occasions, and remains committed to holding people accountable for their actions. You can read more details in this [abuse prevention overview](#).

I pray to Our Father that our Church continues to progress in caring for victims and their families, healing from this crisis, and uniting as one family. As always, I remain,

In the Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Etienne".

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle