

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I am writing this to you due to the recent removal of Archbishop Theodore McCarrick from ministry. Once again, the sins of a cleric have hurt victims, scandalized the faithful, raised anger in many hearts, and brought ill-repute upon the Catholic Church. Archbishop McCarrick's abuse of minors, his homosexual activity and his abuse of seminarians and young priests are beyond the pale. In addition, some knew about this and did nothing to address his behavior. I am as shocked as you. So, first of all, I apologize for his behavior and the behavior of those who did nothing to stop him. It is incredibly wearying and demoralizing to hear yet again about these sexual sins and alleged crimes. Let us hold each other in prayer.

As you may know, each bishop is ultimately responsible to the Holy Father, who is the only one who can remove him. Still, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops will be discussing how we bishops might attempt to hold one another accountable, given this limitation. I can never give a guarantee that there will not be other clerics who violate their promise of celibacy and abuse their positions. We are all sinners. The Lord Jesus knew what the archbishop did just as he knows our sinful selves as well. Beyond what we can do as human beings to address the behavior of one another, we also commend ourselves and each other to the charity and justice of our God. Christ is our hope in all things. May God have mercy on us all.

Bishop Earl Boyea, Diocese of Lansing