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A Letter to the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Newark from Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

February 13, 2019

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The revelations of clergy sexual abuse of minors throughout this past year have provoked feelings of shock, anger, shame, and deep sorrow throughout our Catholic community. Victims, their families, and the faithful are rightfully outraged over the abuses perpetrated against minors. Additionally, the failure of Church leadership to immediately remove suspected abusers from ministry is particularly reprehensible.

In an effort to do what is right and just, we are publishing the names of diocesan clergy credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors in the Archdiocese of Newark. This list of names is the result of an extensive review of Archdiocesan records dating back to 1940. All names were previously reported to law enforcement agencies.

The Archdiocese of Newark has a zero-tolerance policy for any type of mistreatment or misconduct involving children and young adults. No member of the clergy with a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor remains in ministry.

It is our sincerest hope that this disclosure will help bring healing to those whose lives have been so deeply violated. We also pray that this can serve as an initial step in our efforts to help restore your trust in the leadership of the Catholic Church.

I wish to express my genuine sorrow to the victims and their families who were so profoundly betrayed. On behalf of our Church, I beg your forgiveness. You have my solemn promise of prayers and support as you continue on your healing journey.

As a sign of our commitment and support, a new Independent Victim Compensation Program has been established. This program will allow those sexually abused as minors by clergy to seek compensation in a compassionate, expeditious and transparent manner. While no degree of financial compensation can adequately address the suffering endured, we want this to be a genuine expression of our remorse and our desire to comfort and compensate those victimized by this abuse.

The disclosure of this list of names is not an endpoint in our process. Rather, it is an expression of our commitment to protecting our children, and a new level of transparency in the way we report and respond to allegations of abuse. We must protect our children, first, foremost, and always.

Significant progress has been made to ensure that children are safe in today's Church. Since 2002, we have implemented Safe Environment programs and measures that have positively impacted how we create and support safe environments throughout the Archdiocese of Newark.

Moving forward, vigilance must be maintained. We all must be committed to protecting our children, the most vulnerable members of our community.

As such, I urge anyone aware of suspected sexual misconduct by any cleric, employee, or volunteer of the Archdiocese to report it immediately to law enforcement and to the Archdiocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: 201-407-3256.

While these are difficult times for all of us, prayer is critical to maintaining our faith. Let us place our anger, shame, sorrow and disappointment at the feet of Our Lord, asking for the healing that only His grace can provide. We pray that we may be a source of strength and compassion for the victims of abuse and their families. We also pray for all members of the Catholic community who suffer from these tragic wounds in the Body of Christ. And we offer encouragement and fraternal support to the many faithful priests who are so deeply hurt by the failings of their brothers.

I pray that the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Sorrowful Mother, but also the Mother of Holy Hope, may heal our hearts and light our way so that we will see the Church rise again renewed.

Thank you and may God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

The list of clergy names, a video from Cardinal Tobin, answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and additional information is posted on the archdiocesan website: healing.rcan.org

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