

Statement of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin on Holy See Announcement Concerning Theodore E. McCarrick

February 16, 2019

Today the Holy See announced that Theodore E. McCarrick has been dismissed from the clerical state. The decree impacts not only the Archdiocese of Newark, but the entire Catholic community across the world. It especially affects those who have experienced the trauma of sexual abuse by clergy who violated a sacred trust and caused incalculable harm to the lives and well-being of young and adult victims.

It is profoundly disheartening and disturbing to know that a Church leader, who served and led our Archdiocese of Newark for 14 years, acted in a way that is contrary to the Christian way of life as well as his vocation as a priest of Jesus Christ.

To all those abused by clergy, especially the victims of Theodore McCarrick, I continue to express my profound sadness and renew heartfelt apologies for the life-long suffering you have endured. I support your continued healing and uphold my commitment of prayer for you. I also ask my brothers and sisters in Christ to pray for those victimized by clergy and for the transgressors as well.

God will help our community of faith overcome the present hurt, anger, and division. Despite the reprehensible misconduct and crimes of all who have abused minors, we must challenge ourselves to continue to follow Christ our Redeemer in our Church, where the healing power of God's love is manifest each day.

I am grateful to Pope Francis for his leadership throughout this difficult investigation and decision. His determination reflects his resolve to protect the weak and vulnerable, respect human dignity, accept responsibility, and reinforce the Church's commitment to healing, reconciliation, and solidarity with victims. We unite in prayer, support, and service with our Holy Father as he leads the Church to console our brothers and sisters in their suffering.

To the faithful in the Archdiocese of Newark, I restate our commitment to put survivors at the center of our care and concern and to lead this Archdiocese in the coming months and years through processes of renewal and change that strive for healing and reconciliation.

Victims of clergy abuse are encouraged to come forward, no matter how much time has passed. We offer resources and confidential support to those who seek our help. To report an incident of abuse, I urge you to first contact law enforcement, and then the Archdiocese of Newark Victim Assistance Coordinator at 201-407-3256; or visit www.rcan.org for more information.

I will continue to pray for God's grace and healing for the victimized and for the forgiveness of those who have caused such harm. Each day, I work to re-establish the trust of the faithful for the sake of the mission of our Church. Above all, I promise to remain a faithful and vigilant shepherd over our flock during this most difficult time.