



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



Bishop Michael F. Olson
Letter to the Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth
Regarding the Laicization of Theodore E. McCarrick

February 16, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am supportive and grateful to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for his irrevocable decision to dismiss Theodore McCarrick from the clerical state after due process in accord with canon law in which he was found to be guilty of “solicitation in the Sacrament of Confession, and sins against the Sixth Commandment with minors and with adults, with the aggravating factor of the abuse of power.”

It is my hope and prayer that the laicization of Mr. McCarrick will assist in healing those who suffered from his acts of sexual abuse and misconduct. Justice entails that anyone who assisted him in these actions or covered them up also be held accountable.

We read in the Gospel of Luke that Jesus told His Apostles, “Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more,” (*Luke 12:48*). Ministry in the Church is a grace from God that carries with it sober responsibility. Ministry is not a right to be claimed by anyone as an entitlement; rather, it involves a covenantal trust begun through our Baptism as members of the Church established by Christ. This applies even more clearly to those men entrusted with the sacred responsibilities of the ordained ministries of deacon, priest, or bishop.

During my five years of serving as your bishop, I have always taken prompt action in removing priests, deacons, staff, and volunteers when credible allegations of sexual abuse against minors have been established.

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and I have no tolerance for sexual abuse against minors, as well as against vulnerable adults by its clergy, staff, and volunteers, including me as bishop.

Please join me in continuing to pray for those who were harmed by Theodore McCarrick and for anyone else who has suffered the effects of sexual abuse perpetrated by others. I remain,

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

+ Michael F. Olson

Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, STD, MA
Bishop of Fort Worth