

## **A Letter from Our Archbishop** (published on Aug 13)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This past week I was on my annual silent retreat and the accusations against Archbishop McCarrick were a part of my prayer. Faithful have written to me and have asked questions about the situation. Some have felt that the Lord has abandoned the Church. Other bishops have spoken out on this tragedy, and today I offer to you, the faithful of the archdiocese and my brother priests and deacons, the following reflections.

As noted by Cardinal DiNardo, president of the U.S. bishops conference, the revelations about Archbishop McCarrick have caused both bishops and the laity “anger, sadness, and shame.” Personally, I am deeply sorry that both laity and clergy have had to experience this type of betrayal. In response, I am asking every priest in the archdiocese to offer a Mass each month in reparation for the sins committed by cardinals, bishops, priests and deacons, and for all sins committed by clergy and lay people against the commandments of our Lord, as well as to pray for healing for the victims of sin. This Mass is to be announced publicly so the lay faithful can attend and offer prayers in reparation for these grave sins that have wounded so many and for their own sins.

*[Note from bulletin editor: To begin, Masses of Reparation and Healing in September will be at:*

*-St. Anne—Grand Lake, Sep 1 at 5 p.m.;*

*-Our Lady of the Snow—Granby, Sep 11 at 7:30 a.m.]*

The staff of the Archdiocese of Denver and I strive to make every effort to ensure that such things do not occur here. Our preventative measures include: background checks, safe environment classes, mandatory reporter training, creating a conduct response team that is primarily made up of lay people, an annual independent audit of our abuse reporting structures, having a laywoman (Christi Sullivan, 303-715-3241 or

[Christi.Sullivan@ArchDen.org](mailto:Christi.Sullivan@ArchDen.org)) serve as the coordinator of our Safe Environment Office, which deals with all cases of any type of abuse against minors by clergy or laity, and providing psychological screening for candidates for the priesthood.

We also have a Victim’s Assistance Coordinator, Jim Langley, Psy.D., who can be contacted at 720-239-2832 or [Victim.Assistance@ArchDen.org](mailto:Victim.Assistance@ArchDen.org). If anyone in the archdiocese has an abuse situation concerning any member of the clergy or a lay employee of the archdiocese with a minor or the elderly, they may contact one of them. Both Bishop Rodriguez and I take these matters with the utmost seriousness.

During my retreat, my director encouraged me to pray with the calls of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Samuel. In praying with the call of Samuel, I was struck by the Lord’s words to Samuel concerning Eli. The Lord told Samuel to tell Eli, “...I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house from beginning to end. And I tell him that I am about to punish his house forever, **for the**

**iniquity which he knew**, because his sons were blaspheming, and **he did not restrain them** (1 Samuel 3: 12-13, emphasis added). Too many seminarians, priests and bishops knew of Archbishop McCarrick’s behavior and did not restrain him.

Due to this, I call on the U.S. bishops’ conference to ask for and allow an independent investigation that includes members of the lay faithful and those clergy who had nothing to do with the matter. Since the oversight of bishops and cardinals falls under the jurisdiction of Rome, I humbly ask Pope Francis to conduct an independent investigation like he did in Chile.

Like Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, so have I wept for the Church and for the innocent victims. I remember when I visited Auschwitz for the first time in 1988. As I walked with horror in my heart over the palpable evil present, pondering how could human beings do this to other human beings, I heard in prayer, only Jesus Christ and he alone can redeem this evil. The same is true with the sexual abuse crisis of today, as well as with the emptying of our pews, and the abandonment of God by the world. So, what must we do?

We must recognize that complacency about evil and sin is present both in the Church and the world and has led us to where we are today. This culture of complacency among clergy and laity must come to an end!

We have also failed to recognize that the spiritual battle is real. Some say the Lord has forsaken the Church, but this is not true. Rather, there are some within the Church who have forsaken Jesus and the Gospel. Pope Francis speaks often in his homilies of the devil and his workings. The devil is real and pulls us away from the ways of Jesus and the love of the Father. The devil uses confusion, chaos, discouragement, and negative thinking to draw us away from Jesus. When one looks at salvation history one sees, beginning with Adam and Eve, moving through the Old and New Testaments, and down through the centuries to now, that it is human beings who abandon the ways of God. When the ways of God are abandoned, God lets human beings go their own way and there are always dire consequences.

Jesus tells his disciples in John 15 that “apart from me you can do nothing” and he further tells us that if we separate ourselves from the vine, Jesus, we will wither. Perhaps the reason for our empty pews, the sharp decline of the faith in Europe and the west, the decimation of many religious orders, and the sexual abuse crisis is that we are not attached to Jesus, the true vine. At the heart of this crisis today is a spiritual crisis that depends more on the solutions of men than on the Gospel and Jesus. The cost of discipleship is real and it includes dying to ourselves, a complete surrender to Jesus, who loves us and desires only our good and joy (Lk 9: 23-26; Lk 14: 25-35; Mt 16: 24; Jn 15:11).

Thus, our response to this complacency must be a return to the ways of God, which lays out the path of grace that

preserves us from the real dangers of sin and the attacks of the evil one. The Father has given us his Son Jesus, the Beatitudes, the Gospels, the truth, and his commandments out of love for us to keep us on the narrow way of love. He is merciful in all that he has given to us. Charity and truth must always go together. A disciple should never lead someone into sin or condone sin. Jesus never condoned sin! But rather taught that for the unrepentant, the consequence for doing so is hell (Mk 9:42, Lk 17: 1-4). Just as a parent provides boundaries for their children for their own good and protection, so has the Lord provided for us.

All of us within the Church, including the Holy Father, cardinals, bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated and laypersons need to examine our consciences and ask ourselves: Do I truly know, love and serve the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit? And do I follow the ways of Jesus or the ways of the world? In the formation of my conscience do I listen to the voice of God, the voice of the world, or my own voice, and do I test the voice I hear to make sure that it is in accord with the Gospel? Have I personally put my faith in Jesus Christ, and in this time of tribulation do I keep my eyes fixed on “Jesus the leader and perfecter of faith” (Heb 12: 2)? Do I know where I have come from; that God loves me and knew me before I was born (Ps 139)? Do I know where I am going, that I am created for eternal life and to know the Father, as Jesus knows him (Jn 8:14)? Do I truly believe that intimacy with Jesus can heal the wounds of my sins, weakness, or brokenness? And finally, as Jesus so frequently reminds his disciples in John 14 and 15, those who love him keep the commandments, just as he kept the Father’s commandments. Do I do that?

Pope Francis and every pope since Blessed Paul VI, has called us to a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ. This encounter leads to faith in Jesus Christ and a deep personal relationship with him, who in turn leads us to the Father and the Holy Spirit. His desire is for each disciple to be one with the Father and him. Once we put our faith in Jesus, love him and keep the commandments, then the Father and the Son will make their home in our hearts (Jn 14:23). Each one of us must pray for a deeper faith in Jesus each day, the faith that will move mountains (Mt 17:20) and make us into missionary disciples. With God “all things are possible,” (Mk 10:27) and that includes the forgiveness of our sins, the healing of our wounds, becoming a saint, and living a life of holiness and virtue, including chastity. And that brings me to another important aspect of this crisis.

Cardinal DiNardo noted in his statement that “the Church is suffering from a crisis of sexual morality” and it is not just the Church, it is the world. Sadly, too many, both clergy and lay, have listened more to the world than to Christ and the Church when it comes to human sexuality. The consequences of the worldly approach to

sexuality are clear in the distortion of this precious gift and the confusion about sexuality that grows daily. The teaching of the Church on human sexuality has been clear over the centuries, and St. John Paul II helped tremendously with his positive message about the Theology of the Body. Furthermore, those who have received the teaching of the Church and have been accompanied in a loving and merciful way, both young and old, have testified to the truth contained in this teaching, as well as the healing, freedom and joy it brings. This is observed in many of the young people whom I have encountered through the Fellowship of Catholic University Students program, those who have walked in the Neocatechumenal Way, those who have shared in Living Waters or Courage retreats, or participated in Sexaholics Anonymous. Their witness, joy and freedom are real, and it embraces the truth of who they are in the merciful eyes of the God. The God who heals and restores order.

Amidst the darkness of the sexual revolution and all that it has brought about, the Church must decisively return to the truth, dignity and beauty of human sexuality. We must teach that every sexual act that takes place outside of a marriage between a man and woman, is not in keeping with God’s plan for our happiness. When one separates the procreative aspect from sex, one can justify just about any sexual act. As Blessed Paul VI noted in *Humanae Vitae*, this separation has had and will continue to have negative consequences on the Church and society. We must also teach that, according to the Sacred Scripture and tradition, “homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.” They are contrary to the natural law and they “do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2357).

We must also be sure to carefully form seminarians, as we have been doing in the archdiocese for quite some time. However, all seminaries need to devote special attention to the formation of our future priests and their education in chastity, so that they can develop an authentic maturity, and embrace celibacy for the Kingdom of God, respecting and fostering the nuptial meaning of their bodies (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 44). Chastity is a great good that needs to be lived!

The sexual revolution occurring in our culture, which essentially says, “Anything goes if adults consent to it,” is not the way of God and only leads to where we are today. We must be willing to accompany people into the truth of Jesus Christ who will set them free to live the virtues, which bring true freedom, peace and joy.

In closing, I ask all of us to remember to pray and stay close to the heart of Jesus, to ask for the humility of Jesus and the gift of loving others as Jesus loves (Jn 13:34). Every disciple must pray for the gift of faith and a deeper trust and confidence in Jesus, most especially in his healing power. We must pray for all victims of sexual

abuse in our culture today, for their healing and their encounter with Jesus Christ, who can bring healing to them.

We must pray for the clergy of the Church, the Pope, cardinals, bishops, priests and deacons, that the Holy Spirit will stir into flame the gifts he has bestowed on them, help them to be faithful to Christ and the Gospel, and to be true servants of the faithful with the heart of Christ. We must pray for the Church, our Mother, that is holy, though having sinners in her midst, and suffers for the offenses of all her members.

Let us pray for the virtue of hope, so that we come to the awareness that we can do all things in Christ, who gives us the strength to be saints (Phil 4:13). Let us ask for the gift of piety, so that we truly behave as God's children and reverence our own and each other's bodies as temples of the Spirit. Let us beg for the grace to have pure hearts (Mt 5: 7).

Finally, as those who belong to Jesus, we must pray for our enemies and those who persecute us. We can never wish evil or seek vengeance on another (PV 24:29; Mt 5: 44-48; Col 3:13; Rom 12:19-21). Every human being is a sinner whom Jesus loves and is in need of the mercy of Jesus. Jesus forgave every human being from the Cross when he said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." No matter how egregious the sin, the Lord is willing to forgive us if we "repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mk 1:15). This forgiveness, like his love, must be received. He reminds us to be merciful as his Father is merciful and that the Father loves both the just and unjust (Mt 5:44-48). In this time of darkness, may we put our faith, trust and love in Jesus who is our Savior and Redeemer, the one who will free us, and may we live in his truth and light!

With the love of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd,  
*Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L.*  
Archbishop of Denver

**Luke 9:23-24:** Then [Jesus] said to all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."

-As the Church (which includes God, Angels, Saints, souls in Purgatory, and you and I) suffers, how will you and I cooperate with God to repair her and heal her?

### **Call to Prayer: Get Out Your Weapons!**

Each Friday, August 3 – September 28, answer the U. S. bishops' call to pray and fast that a change in the U.S. Supreme Court will move our nation closer to the day when every human being is protected and welcomed in life. Join at [www.usccb.org/pray!](http://www.usccb.org/pray!)

If you go to this above website, click on the Novena for the Legal Protection of Human Life each Friday, from August 3, 2018 to September 28, 2018.

### **Praise God for the Rain!**

God answered everyone's prayers. In the Roman Missal, the book that priests use to offer Mass, there is a special Mass for rain. We offered Masses for rain on Thursday and Friday.

### **Gems of Wisdom from the Diary of Saint Faustina**

**1063.** Today, Jesus is bidding me to comfort and reassure a certain soul who has opened herself to me and told me about her difficulties. This soul is pleasing to the Lord, but she is not aware of it. God is keeping her in deep humility. I have carried out the Lord's directives.

### **Vacancy on the Board of Directors for the Pregnancy Resource Connection**

Being on the Board is both rewarding and inspiring. The time commitment is minimal. Please call Pat Pulliam for more information at 361-442-3532.

### **Calendar of Events**

**-Aug 23 (Thu).** Rockies game for servers and families

**-Sep 1 (Sat).** First Saturday Mass at OLS, 9:30 a.m.

#### **Mass Collections, August 11 – 12**

St. Anne	\$ 1705
St. Bernard	3400
Our Lady of the Snow	2427
St. Peter	533
St. Ignatius	<u>611</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8676</b>

#### **Vocations Prayer Calendar**

***Please pray for our seminarians every day.***

**Sat**—Patrick DiLoreto & Micah Flores

**Sun**—Kevin Kasel & Miguel Mendoza

**Mon**—Clayton Milla & Samuel Munson

**Tue**—Manuel Alarcon & Sile Kone

**Wed**—Carlos Mejia & R.D. Braz

**Thu**—Holy Vocations to marriage

**Fri**—Increase in vocations to priesthood/religious life

#### **Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS**

**KEY:** StA = St. Anne; StB = St. Bernard;

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Aug 18, StA, 5 p.m., +Dorothy and John Dorr

-Sat, Aug 18, StB, 5:30 p.m., People in our region/visitors

-Sun, Aug 19, StB, 7 a.m., +Jan Reynolds

-Sun, Aug 19, OLS, 9:30 a.m., Dan/Sabrina Machiniak

#### **Weekday Masses**

-Mon, Aug 20, StA, 8:30 a.m., Michael and Joan Good

-Tue, Aug 21, OLS, 7:30 a.m., Jo Creath

-Wed, Aug 22, StB, 8:30 a.m., Eugene and Marta Kranz

-Thu, Aug 23, **OLS, 8:30 a.m.**, God's Little Instruments

-Fri, Aug 24, **OLS, 8:30 a.m.**, Joe and Carol Morales

#### **Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI**

**KEY:** StP = St. Peter; StI = St. Ignatius (Walden)

-Sun, Aug 19, StP, 10 a.m., People in our region & visitors

-Sun, Aug 19, StI, 1 p.m., Tim and Barb Lytle