



## Office of the Bishop

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# Regarding the difficult situation of Archbishop McCarrick

**Statement by Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger  
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The immensely sad and disturbing past sexual misconduct by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick have once again brought sorrow, anger, and dismay to the American Catholic community. As your bishop, I grieve for the victims of the Archbishop's abuse and fully support the efforts to ensure justice and accountability. Our first and foremost concern always must be for the victims. They deserve not only prayer, compassion and care, but justice and accountability. As Cardinal Sean O'Malley has stated, "Words are not enough." Action must accompany our words.

Pope Francis has taken the important step of accepting McCarrick's resignation from the College of Cardinals and assigning him to a life of prayer and penance. However, it also is important for the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to review the current bishops' charter for the protection of children and youth to address clergy abuse, otherwise known as the Dallas Charter. The Charter needs to ensure that procedures and practices are in place to hold clergy, employees, volunteers, and bishops to the same level of accountability. As one of the bishops with a background in the law that governs the affairs of the Church, I support this initiative.

We are a Church of mercy; as Pope Francis constantly reminds us, "we all are sinners." While forgiveness is at the heart of the Gospel, it is exercised always in conjunction with the virtue of justice. Mercy does not diminish the importance of accountability, of repentance and restoration of the

scales of justice. We are challenged to follow the difficult path of discipleship to which Jesus calls us.

In response to the horrific clergy abuse scandal that erupted in 2002, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has taken steps to ensure that our parishes and ministries are places where children, vulnerable adults and others are safe from sexual abuse and predatory behavior. That commitment requires ongoing vigilance and never can be taken for granted. I take the opportunity provided by these sad revelations to remind anyone who may have experienced abuse in the Diocese of Tucson, to take the first step of contacting law enforcement officials and then, the Diocesan Office of Child, Adolescent and Adult Protection at 520-838-2513.

Through our efforts, prayer, and renewed commitment, may we together build up the Church that we love, the very body of Christ.

Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger