

November 9, 2018

Dear parishioners of St. Ann,

As you may already have seen, the Archdiocese of Atlanta published on November 6 a list of clergy/religious/seminarians who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor. We commend the archdiocese for taking this positive step to help us heal from these horrible acts. It should also be noted that all credible claims were handled in an appropriate and timely manner. Sadly, two names on that list, which dates back to the beginning of the diocese in 1956, are related to the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette.

Kenneth Cassity was discerning religious life as a La Salette and lived in the St. Ann rectory and worked in the parish from July 1999 through August 2000. When his discernment ended, he moved to Orlando, having no further contact with the La Salette community. In May 2002, by which time his relationship with the La Salette community had been terminated, a credible accusation was made against Cassity during his time at St. Ann. Investigation of the claim followed established protocol and he was subsequently arrested and convicted in 2003. He went to jail and died in 2006.

Richard Boucher is a La Salette priest who was pastor for a short time in Our Lady of La Salette Church in Canton in the early 1990s. After a credible allegation was made against him in 1992, he was immediately removed from all priestly and pastoral ministry by the La Salette Missionaries, as is still the case to this day. He may have had reason to be on our campus occasionally while he was in Canton for events such as a penance service.

I wish to express, on behalf of the Missionaries of La Salette, my deepest sorrow and anger and hurt over the actions of any La Salette or anyone associated with our name who has caused hurt and pain to any of God's precious children, young people and their families.

With you, I hope and pray that the U.S. bishops, who will meet in Baltimore Nov. 12-14, will find the grace and courage to vote yes on a series of concrete measures to continue to respond to abuse cases. Such measures will include: firming up third-party reporting mechanisms and laity-led review boards to review accusations against bishops as is the case with allegations made against other clergy; tightening standards of conduct for bishops, especially in their accountability for reporting and responding to abuse and protocol for dealing with those who are negligent in that responsibility; and intense review of bishops resigned or removed because of credible accusations of abuse or failure to report such abuse by clergy. With you, I pray that the bishops gathered may find the strength and wisdom to create the way forward with their decisions and truly take the bold action necessary to heal the Church.

I reaffirm our commitment to a safe environment here at St. Ann for all our parishioners, especially the young and most vulnerable. Zero tolerance is our firm commitment. Details on our Safe Environment program can be found [HERE](#).

If you have been abused or know of someone who has a credible allegation of abuse of a minor, please contact the archdiocese hotline: 1-888-437-0764. The list recently published will be amended if/when further credible allegations are brought to light. It can be found [HERE](#).

The church of Christ, especially in its incarnation here at St. Ann, is meant to be our spiritual home, where all God's children feel and live safe. May God continue to bless us all with the Spirit's gifts of healing, courage, forgiveness and hope as we move forward as Christ's Church.

Sincerely,

Father Ray

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