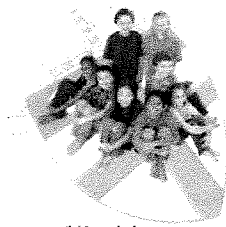


Points of Discussion from The Open Forum held on September 4, 2018

- Expressions of thanks to Fr. Dan and Fr. Arena for their homilies, for the opportunity for parishioners to express themselves amid the suffering and sorrowing
- Concern that parish priests should be brought into the discussion on a solution to the problem of abuse in the Church
- Expression of disappointment at the Church's handling of the abuses, call for laity to take action
- Concern that the Bishops be held accountable, that secret archives be eliminated, for transparency
- Request for clarification on the Church's position on lifting the statute of limitations
- Expression of disappointment at the reports of abuse, lack of accountability, and unsatisfactory processes for justice in the Church
- Question raised of how we can rebuild the Church, suggestions of elimination of positions in the Church, sacrifices to be made
- Requests for suggestions on what we tell our children in regards to not leaving the Church, and how we are to witness to our peers
- Expression of embarrassment at being associated with the Catholic Church at this time
- Disappointment that while the abuses are bad, the deliberate cover-up is also bad – call for renewal in the Church
- Recognition that the Church is alive at St. John Neumann, that we have good priests and a good parish
- Call for transparency in the Church from the “top” to the local church
- Suggestion that priests protest the lack of transparency
- Concern about secrecy and the ability of the Church to keep the next generation in the Church
- Concern that the Communist party has infiltrated the Church
- Witness from a victim that the betrayal of trust never goes away, but her Catholic faith is unwavering
- Expression that the Church as an institution and a people is sick and needs to heal
- Concern that individuals read the original report and primary sources, and not rely solely on the media
- Call to pray for vocations
- Witness from the parents of a seminarian that their son is on fire with his faith and unintimidated in the aftermath of the report
- Concern about the seal of Confession and the responsibility of mandated reporters of abuse
- Expression that abuse happens wherever there are secrets, in the family as well as the Church
- Concern of a convert about being able to trust bishops and priests
- Witness that it was the Sacraments that drew an individual to Catholicism, not priests
- Concern over individuals leaving the Church, call to meet monthly and develop an action plan
- Expression that it is our duty as a parish to bring about change in the face of evil
- Concern for our priests in the midst of this scandal
- Concern over witnessing to own children and peers because of the report
- Expression that Fr. Arena's homily after the release of the report gave individual's family hope
- Expression that change looks like and happens when we become saints to witness to the next generation
- Expression that the Holy Spirit is at work, be encouraged that the faith is alive in the young Church

If you are interested in reading the full transcripts from the meeting, you can pick up a copy in the parish office.

Child Abuse Prevention:



Diocese of Harrisburg
Youth Protection Program

The Diocese of Harrisburg takes the protection of youth in all Church related activities and programs very seriously. That is why we have an aggressive safe environment program with a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy, employees or volunteers and gives guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

- **We are aggressive in rooting out abusers** in ministry or employment within the Diocese. If anyone has even one proven allegation they are barred permanently from ministry or employment.
- **We report every allegation we receive** to the District Attorney of the county involved.
- **We help survivors to heal.** We have a Victims Assistance Coordinator for survivors and families.
- **We screen all employees and volunteers** with multiple background certifications and abusers are ineligible for hire and not permitted to volunteer in any capacity.
- **We train people to recognize and report abuse.** We require that employees and volunteers successfully complete a state approved online training program on how to recognize and report child abuse.
- **We teach students how to stay safe.** Students receive instruction in age-appropriate child abuse awareness programs.
- **We provide ID badges for all persons** who have completed the requirement of our Diocesan Youth Protection Program.
- **We execute a prudent and prompt** inquiry and reporting of each accusation. If law enforcement declines to act, the Diocese contracts with professional investigators, not clergy or Church employees, to conduct an independent and thorough investigation.
- **We openly communicate with all involved** and support due process.
- **We comply with national standards for youth protection** and are audited annually in an independent audit.

There are **TWO** steps to make a complaint:

1. We encourage anyone who suspects abuse of a minor to call the toll free PA Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-932-0313.
2. To report suspected abuse of a minor by a church official, employee or volunteer, also please call the Diocesan toll-free hotline at 1-800-626-1608 or email: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org. **It is critical that the Church be made aware of any complaints immediately so that we can remove that person from active ministry or service.**

For more information, please go to www.youthprotectionhbg.com.