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Established 1924

Saint Therese Church

www.StThereseChurchAlhambra.org

† *Special Edition* †

Addressing the Current Clergy Scandal in the Church

It's Time to Put an End to "See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak of No Evil"



Response from Pope Francis

Written
August 20,
2018



"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Cor 12:26). These words of St. Paul forcefully echo in my heart as I acknowledge once more the suffering endured by many minors due to sexual abuse, the abuse of power, and the abuse of conscience perpetrated by a significant number of clerics and consecrated persons. Crimes that inflict deep wounds of pain and powerlessness, primarily among the victims, but also in their family members and in the larger community of believers and nonbelievers alike. Looking back, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also **to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated.** The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.

In recent days, a report was made public which detailed the experiences of at least a thousand survivors, victims of sexual abuse, the abuse of power and of conscience at the hands of priests over a period of approximately seventy years. We have realized that these wounds never disappear and that they require us forcefully to condemn these atrocities and join forces in uprooting this culture of death. The heart-wrenching pain of these victims, who cry out to Heaven, was long ignored, kept quiet, or silenced. But their outcry was more powerful than all the measures meant to silence them. The Lord heard that cry and once again showed us on which side He stands.

With shame and repentance, we acknowledge as an ecclesial community that we were not where we should have been, that we did not act in a timely manner, realizing the magnitude and the gravity of the damage done to so many lives. We showed no care for the little ones; we abandoned them. I make my own the words of the then-Cardinal Ratzinger when, during the Way of the Cross on Good Friday 2005, he identified with the cry of pain of so many victims and exclaimed: "How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to [Christ]! Christ's betrayal by His disciples, their unworthy reception of His Body and Blood, is certainly the greatest suffering endured by the Redeemer" (Ninth Station).

I am conscious of the effort and work being carried out in various parts of the world to come up with the necessary means to ensure the safety and protection of the integrity of children and of vulnerable adults, as well as implementing zero tolerance and ways of making all those who perpetrate or cover up these crimes accountable. We have unfortunately delayed in applying these actions and sanctions that are so necessary, yet I am confident that they will ultimately help to guarantee a greater culture of care in the present and future. I invite the entire holy faithful People of God to a penitential exercise of prayer and fasting in order to make firm our solidarity and commitment to a culture of care that says "never again" to every form of abuse.

It is essential that we, as a Church, be able to acknowledge and condemn, with sorrow and shame, the atrocities perpetrated by consecrated persons, clerics, and all those entrusted with the mission of watching over and caring for those most vulnerable. Let us beg forgiveness for our own sins and the sins of others. An awareness of sin helps us to acknowledge the errors, the crimes and the wounds caused in the past and allows us, in the present, to be more open and committed along a journey of renewed conversion. When we experience the desolation caused by these ecclesial wounds, we will do well, with Mary, "to insist more upon prayer," seeking to grow all the more in love and fidelity to the Church. She, the first of the disciples, teaches all of us as disciples how we are to halt before the sufferings of the innocent, without excuses or cowardice. To look to Mary is to discover the model of a true follower of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit grant us the grace of conversion and the interior anointing needed to express before these crimes of abuse our compunction and our resolve courageously to combat them.

...And from Bishop Robert Barron

Written
August 9,
2018

Dear People of God,

When I was going through school, the devil was presented to us as a myth, a symbol representing evil in the world. I will admit to internalizing this view and largely losing my sense of the devil as a real spiritual person. What shook my agnosticism in regard to the Evil One was the clerical sex abuse scandal of the nineties and the early 2000s. I say this because that awful crisis just seemed too thought-through, too well-coordinated, to be simply the result of chance or wicked human choice. The devil is characterized as “the enemy of the human race” and, particularly, as “the enemy of the Church.” I challenge anyone to come up with a more devastatingly-effective strategy for attacking the mystical Body of Christ than the abuse of children and young people by priests. This sin had countless direct victims, of course; but it also crippled the Church financially, undercut vocations, caused people to lose confidence in Christianity, dramatically compromised attempts at evangelization, etc. It was a diabolical masterpiece.



† Bishop
Robert Barron
Auxiliary
Bishop of L.A.



Sometime in the early 2000s, I was attending a conference and found myself wandering amongst the booths hosted by various groups. At one, the woman there said, “You’re Fr. Barron, aren’t you?” I replied affirmatively, and she continued, “You’re doing good work for the Church, but this means that the devil wants to stop you. And you know, he’s a lot smarter than you are and a lot more powerful.” I think I just mumbled something to her at that moment, but she was right, and I knew it. All of this has come back to me in the wake of the Archbishop McCarrick catastrophe. St. Paul warned us that we battle not against flesh and blood, but against “powers and principalities.” Consequently, the principal work of the Church at this devastating moment ought to be prayer, the conscious and insistent invoking of Christ and the saints. Now I can hear people saying, “So Bishop Barron is blaming it all on the devil.” Not at all. The devil works *through* temptation, suggestion, and insinuation—and he accomplishes nothing without our cooperation. Archbishop McCarrick did wicked things and so did those who enabled him. And we have to come to terms with these sins.

Before I broach the subject of how to do this, permit me to say a few words about unhelpful strategies being bandied about. A first one is indiscriminate scapegoating. The great philosopher René Girard taught us that when communities enter into crisis, people typically commence casting about for someone or some group to blame. In the catharsis of this indiscriminate accusation, they find a kind of release, an ersatz peace. “All the bishops should resign!” “The priesthood is a cesspool of immorality!” “The seminaries are all corrupt!” As I say, these assertions might be emotionally satisfying at some level, but they are deeply unjust and conduce toward greater and not less dysfunction.

The second negative strategy is the riding of ideological hobby horses. So lots of commentators—left, center, and right—have chimed in to say that the real cause of the McCarrick disaster is, take your pick, the ignoring of *Humanae Vitae*, priestly celibacy, rampant homosexuality in the Church, the mistreatment of homosexuals, the sexual revolution, etc. Mind you, I’m not saying for a moment that these aren’t important considerations and that some of the suggestions might not have real merit. But I *am* saying that launching into a consideration of these matters that we have been debating for decades amounts right now to a distraction.

So what should be done? The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has no juridical or canonical authority to discipline bishops. And even if it tried to launch an investigation, it has, at the moment, very little credibility. Only the Pope has juridical and disciplinary powers in regard to bishops. Hence, I would suggest that the bishops of the United States petition the Holy Father to form a team, made up mostly of faithful lay Catholics skilled in forensic investigation, and to empower them to have access to all of the relevant documentation and financial records. Their task should be to determine how Archbishop McCarrick managed, despite his widespread reputation for iniquity, to rise through the ranks of the hierarchy and to continue, in his retirement years, to function as a roving ambassador for the Church and to have a disproportionate influence on the appointment of bishops. They should ask the ecclesial version of Sen. Howard Baker’s famous questions: “What did the responsible parties know and when did they know it?” Only after these matters are settled will we know what the next steps ought to be.

In the meantime, and above all, we should ask the Our Lord and all the Heavenly Powers to fight with us and for us. I might suggest especially calling upon the one famous for crushing the head of the serpent.

Reaction from Bishop Robert Morlino

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

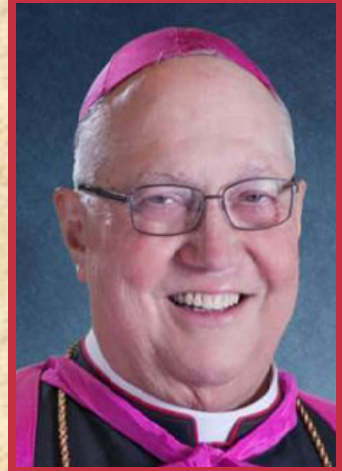
Written on
August 18, 2018

The past weeks have brought a great deal of scandal, justified anger, and a call for answers and action by many faithful Catholics here in the U.S. and overseas, directed at the Church hierarchy regarding sexual sins by bishops, priests, and even cardinals. Still more anger is rightly directed at those who have been complicit in keeping some of these serious sins from coming to light.

For my part, I am tired of this. I am tired of people being hurt, gravely hurt! I am tired of the obfuscation of truth. I am tired of sin. And, as one who has tried to lay down my life for Christ and His Church, I am tired of the regular violation of sacred duties by those entrusted with immense responsibility from the Lord for the care of His people. The stories being brought into light and displayed in gruesome detail with regard to some priests, religious, and even those in places of highest leadership, are sickening. Hearing even one of these stories is, quite literally, enough to make someone sick. But my own sickness at the stories is quickly put into perspective when I recall the fact that many individuals have lived through them for years. For them, these are not stories, they are indeed realities. To them I turn and say, again, I am sorry for what you have suffered and what you continue to suffer in your mind and in your heart. If you have not already done so, I beg you to reach out, as hard as that may be, to seek help to begin to heal. Contact your Bishop's office so that we might begin to try to set things right to the greatest extent possible.

There is nothing about these stories that is okay. These actions, committed by more than a few, can only be classified as evil, evil that cries out for justice and sin that must be cast out from our Church. Faced with stories of the depravity of sinners within the Church, I have been tempted to despair. And why? The reality of sin—even sin in the Church—is nothing new. We are a Church made of sinners, but we are sinners called to sanctity. So what is new? What is new is the seeming acceptance of sin by some in the Church, and the apparent efforts to cover over sin by them and others. Unless and until we take seriously our call to sanctity, we, as an institution and as individuals, will continue to suffer the “wages of sin.” For too long, we have diminished the reality of sin by refusing to call a sin a sin—and we have excused sin in the name of a mistaken notion of mercy. In our efforts to be open to the world, we have become all too willing to abandon the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

In order to avoid causing offense, we offer to ourselves and to others niceties and human consolation. Why do we do this? Is it out of an earnest desire to display a misguided sense of being “pastoral?” Have we covered over the truth out of fear? Are we afraid of being disliked by people in this world? Or are we afraid of being called hypocrites because by calling out others, our lives will be more closely examined?



Perhaps these are the reasons, but perhaps it is more complex. In the end, the excuses do not matter. We must be done with sin. It must be rooted out and again considered unacceptable. Love sinners? Yes. Accept true repentance? Yes. But do not say sin is okay. And do not pretend that grave violations of office and of trust come without grave, lasting consequences. For the Church, the crisis we face is not limited to the McCarrick affair, or the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report, or anything else that may come. The deeper crisis that must be addressed is the license for sin to have a home in individuals at every level of the Church. There is a certain comfort level with sin that has come to pervade our teaching, our preaching, our decision making, and our very way of living.

If you'll permit me, what the Church needs now is more hatred—hatred of wickedness! St. Thomas Aquinas said that such hatred actually belongs to the virtue of charity. It is an act of love to hate sin and to call others to turn away from sin. There must be no refuge for sin in our own lives or within the lives of our communities. To be a refuge for sinners, the Church must be a place where sinners can turn to be reconciled. In this I speak of all sin, but in the specific situations at hand, we are talking about deviant sexual—almost exclusively homosexual—acts by clerics. We're also talking about homosexual propositions and abuses against seminarians and young priests by powerful priests, bishops, and cardinals. We are talking about sacrilegious acts and actions which are not only in violation of the sacred promises made by some, but also are in violation of the natural moral law for all. To call it anything else would be deceitful and would only ignore the problem further.

of the Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin

There has been a great deal of effort to keep separate those acts which fall under the category of “now-culturally-acceptable” acts of homosexuality from the publically-deplorable acts of pedophilia. Until recently the problems of the Church have been painted purely as problems of pedophilia—despite clear evidence to the contrary. It is time to be honest that the problems are both and they are more. To fall into the trap of parsing problems according to what society might find acceptable or unacceptable is ignoring the fact that the Church has never held *ANY* of it to be acceptable—neither the abuse of children, nor any use of one’s sexuality outside of the marital relationship between a man and a woman, nor the sin of sodomy, nor the entering of clerics into intimate sexual relationships at all, nor the abuse and coercion by those with authority.

In this last regard, special mention should be made of the most notorious and highest-in-ranking case, that being the sexual sins, predation, and abuse of power (oft-rumored, now very public) of former-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick. The well-documented details of this case are disgraceful and seriously scandalous, as is any covering-up of such appalling actions by other Church leaders who knew about it. While recent credible accusations of child sexual abuse by McCarrick have brought a whole slew of issues to light, long-ignored was the issue of abuse of his power for the sake of homosexual gratification.

It is time to admit that there is a homosexual subculture within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church that is wreaking great devastation. The Church’s teaching is clear that the homosexual *inclination* is not in itself sinful, but acting on it is intrinsically disordered, and any man afflicted by it is unfit to be a priest. The decision to act upon this disordered inclination is a sin so grave that it cries out to heaven for vengeance, especially when it involves preying upon the young or the vulnerable. Christian charity itself demands that we should hate wickedness just as we love goodness. But while hating the sin, we must never hate the sinner, who is called to conversion, penance, and renewed communion with Christ and His Church.

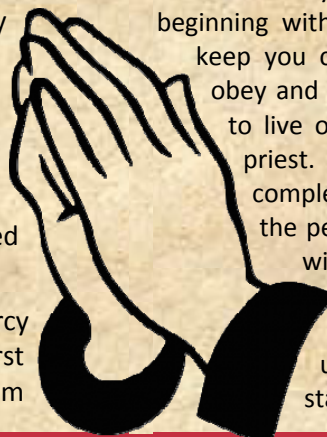
At the same time, however, the love and mercy which we are called to have even for the worst of sinners does not exclude holding them

accountable for their actions through a punishment proportionate to the gravity of their offense. In fact, a just punishment is an important work of love and mercy, because, while it serves primarily as retribution for the offense committed, it also offers the guilty party an opportunity to make expiation for his sin in this life, thus sparing him worse punishment in the life to come. Motivated, therefore, by love and concern for souls, I stand with those calling for justice to be done upon the guilty. The sins and crimes of McCarrick, and of far too many others in the Church, bring suspicion and mistrust upon many good and virtuous clergymen, and suspicion and mistrust upon seminaries and so many faithful seminarians. The result of the first instance of mistrust harms the Church and the very good work we do in Christ’s name. It causes others to sin in their thoughts, words, and deeds—the very definition of scandal. The second mistrust harms the future of the Church, since our future priests are at stake.

My temptation to despair quickly passed, thanks be to God. No matter how large the problem, we know that we are called to go forward in faith and to work hard to make a difference within our spheres of influence. I recently had the opportunity to talk with our seminarians about these very pressing matters, and I have begun to talk with the priests of my diocese, as well as the faithful through my weekly column and homilies. Here now, I offer a few thoughts.

To our seminarians: If you are unchastely propositioned, abused, or threatened (no matter by whom), or if you directly witness unchaste behavior, report it to me and to the seminary rector. I will address it swiftly and vigorously.

To our priests: Live out the promises you made on your ordination day. You are called to serve Christ’s people, beginning with praying daily the Liturgy of the Hours to keep you close to God. In addition, you promised to obey and be loyal to your bishop. In obedience, strive to live out your priesthood as a holy, hard-working priest. Live a chaste, celibate life so that you can completely give your life to Christ, the Church, and the people whom He has called you to serve. God will give you the graces to do so. If you are unchastely propositioned, abused, or threatened, or if you directly witness unchaste behavior, report it to me. I will not stand for this!



Bishop Morlino (Conclusion)

To the faithful: If you are the victim of abuse of any kind by a priest, bishop, cardinal, or any employee of the Church, bring it forward to the office of your local bishop. If you have directly witnessed sexual advances or any type of abuse, bring it forward as well. Such actions are sinful and scandalous, and we will not allow anyone to use their position or power to abuse another person.

I ask everyone reading this to pray. Pray earnestly for the Church and all her ministers. Pray for our seminarians and pray for yourselves and your families. We must all work daily on our own personal holiness and hold ourselves and our brothers and sisters accountable. Finally, I ask you all to join me in making public and private acts of reparation to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for all the sins of sexual depravity committed by members of the clergy and episcopacy.

More than anything else, we must refuse to be silent in the face of sin and evil in our families and communities. We must demand from our pastors that they themselves strive for holiness. Right now there is a lot of justified anger and passion coming from many holy and faithful lay people and clerics across the country, calling for real reform and “house cleaning” of this type of depravity. I promise that, **“As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”**



NOTE FROM FR. PHILIP: Because we already read our own Archbishop’s response to this crisis at last Sunday’s Masses, we chose instead to publish this response from Bishop Morlino. If you were not present last weekend and wish to read Archbishop Jose Gomez’ letter, go to: <https://angelusnews.com/voices/archbishop-gomez/archbishop-gomez-penance-purification-needed-to-rebuild-church>

Our Parish Responds

By Rhonda Storey, Director of Religious Education

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles mandates all staff (paid or volunteer), and all volunteers—who work in any capacity with or around children, the elderly, or people with special needs—to complete the three-hour **VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children for Adults program** and be re-certified every four years. This education component helps prevent child sexual abuse by first making every everyone aware of the surrounding issues. This includes awareness of the many ways sexual abuse harms its victims, their families, parishes, schools, and communities. The session also helps adults learn to recognize the warning signs of perpetrators and shows appropriate ways to respond to suspicious behavior. We want to be “THE EYES, EARS AND VOICES OF OUR COMMUNITIES”! Finally, the session empowers each person with five steps to help prevent child sexual abuse; teaches how perpetrators operate; and shows how caring adults can keep our children safe. The session also stresses monitoring computers, cell phones, and other technology that perpetrators use to gain access to those vulnerable.

More than 150,000 priests, deacons, parish and school staff members, and volunteers have already participated in these sessions throughout the five Pastoral Regions of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Our goal is to provide this training to all adults who work with or around children so we can work together as a more effective community.

I have been a VIRTUS facilitator for about 10 years. My goal has been to educate our parishioners (adults, teens and children) about the possible dangers that surround us every day. It has been my heartfelt goal to create a community that is aware and able to speak up in order to communicate their concerns. And it IS working here—and in many other groups that we are involved in outside of parish life. I pray fervently that we heal from these hurts and crimes and that we continue to go forward with loving, knowledgeable hearts! Clergy and lay people in our churches need not be silent anymore! We need to speak up and out! Please become part of the solution to abuse in our churches and communities. EYES AND EARS EVERYWHERE!

We regularly offer VIRTUS® classes and fingerprinting sessions. Here is the upcoming schedule:



FINGERPRINTING & VIRTUS CLASSES

Anyone—employee or volunteer—who works with or around children in any L.A. Archdiocesan parish or school **MUST** be FINGERPRINTED and take a VIRTUS CLASS.

FINGERPRINTING will be held on **Wednesday, August 29, from Noon to 7:00 p.m. MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT!** Call Rhonda Storey at 284-0020, ext. 1, to schedule one OR for any questions.

INITIAL CLASS: “Protecting God’s Children” is the initial three-hour class. It will be held **Tuesday, October 16, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., in the Parish Meeting Room.**

RECERTIFICATION CLASS: “Keeping the Promise Alive” is the recertification class, which must be taken every four years by all those who have already attended the initial class. It will be held on **Tuesday, October 30, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., in the Parish Meeting Room.**

NO NEED TO REGISTER FOR CLASSES! Just arrive on time!

Mass Intentions

And...Our Response as Catholics

For Week of 8/25/18 TO 9/1/18

Saturday:

5:00 p.m.: Lisa Losorelli, INT

Sunday

*7:30 am: Alison Claire Park, INT

7:30 a.m.: Parishioners

9:00 a.m.: Leticia Baldwin, RIP

11:00 a.m.: Gus Dennison, RIP

1:00 p.m. (Latin): Ernesto Estrella Arenillo, RIP

5:00 p.m.: Darey, Penny, Tristan, & Zarah Huo, INT

Monday:

6:00 a.m.: Cesar Torres, RIP

*7:30 a.m.: Enrique Lunas, RIP

8:00 a.m.: Fran Meyer, RIP

Tuesday:

6:00 a.m.: Cesar Torres, RIP

*7:30 a.m.: Brad Thompson, INT

8:00 a.m.: Allan Wong, RIP

Wednesday:

6:00 a.m.: Elyze Tuan, INT

*7:30 a.m.: Heather Brajkovich, RIP

8:00 a.m.: Mary DeSantis, RIP

Thursday:

6:00 a.m.: Fr. Steve Watson, OCD, Birthday INT

7:30 a.m.: Alison Claire Park, INT

8:00 a.m.: Fran Meyer, RIP

Friday:

6:00 a.m.: Cesar Torres, RIP

*7:30 a.m.: John Paul Sullivan, RIP

8:00 a.m.: Josh Andrews, INT

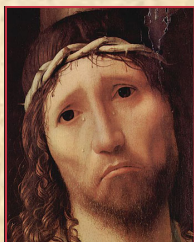
Saturday:

6:00 a.m.: Jaime Doria, RIP

*7:30 a.m.: Carmelite Community

8:00 a.m.: Peter Kretschmer, INT

***Held at the Carmelite Chapel,
215 East Alhambra Road.**



By Gregory Popcak of Catholic Digest

The priest sex abuse and cover-up in the Church is unconscionable. Words can't describe the disgust, frustration, pain, betrayal, and anger many Catholics feel. It's natural to experience these feelings, but the outrage can lead to important changes that will hopefully cure the infection in the Body of Christ and prevent similar wounds from happening. But along the way, it's possible for people to be so frustrated that their faith doesn't survive. Here are some suggestions to keep this from happening to you.

Ask yourself: "What do I believe in?" Researchers who study the psychology of faith know that people belong to a church for different reasons. Some go to church simply for community or to feel comfort. Reasons like these, however, tend to result in weak ties to a Faith Community. *What happens to my faith when the people I believe in let me down?* Scripture cautions us against putting our faith "in princes, in mortal men in whom there is no salvation" (Psalm 146:3). People are not perfect and will always let us down. If we belong to the Church, it must be **because it is where we most intimately encounter Christ: In the Sacraments.** Those who take this opportunity to refocus on their connection with Christ in the Sacraments will experience the scandal as painful, **but NOT** as faith-shattering. They, like the early Apostles, will look at the face of Christ in the midst of the crisis. When He asks, *"Will you also leave?"* they will say, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life!"* (John 6:68).

Pray. Prayer is vital to maintaining our faith. Be honest with God about the frustration and disappointment you have with Church leadership, about your anguish for the victims, and about your own sadness that your faith is being challenged in these ways. But ask God to help you grow in love for Him and for His Church. Ask Him to strengthen you for the journey ahead, that you might be able to be an encouragement to the many faithful priests who are so deeply hurt by the sins of their brothers as well as a source of comfort for any victims you may know or meet.

Aid in the healing. In response to the crisis, the pope and many faithful bishops and priests have called for everyone to be more faithful and even to do penance. This often results in the laity

getting more than a little irritated: *"Why should I do penance? I didn't do anything wrong!"* The reaction is understandable but, I think, misguided. Doing penance for the Church is not the same as taking blame for the scandal. Think of it this way: When your body gets sick, sometimes that sickness can spread to other parts of the body that were previously unaffected. When the Church calls people to repent, She isn't saying it's your fault that some priests abused kids and some bishops covered it up. She's saying you're needed to help make the whole Body of Christ as healthy as possible without falling prey to secondary spiritual "infections" (despair, hopelessness, loss of faith) so that the Church can concentrate its efforts on healing what is hurt the most.

How to respond. In the wake of the scandal, people may ask, "How can you stay Catholic?" A recent poll revealed that 88% of Catholics report that the scandal hasn't affected their dealings with priests; 82% say it will not affect their Mass attendance; 79% say it will have no effect on donations; and 87% say that it will not affect their children's involvement in Church activities. These statistics do not surprise the Faithful who know they're not Catholic because of the perfection of the Church's priests or people. Far from it! Catholics are saddened and disgusted by the scandal, but not surprised. We know that despite the sin that is in the People of God, Jesus Christ continues to change lives and challenge the world through the Church He founded. We stay because of Christ, who touches our hearts through His Sacraments, nourishes us through the Eucharist, and empowers us through His grace to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable with the Gospel of Life. It is these encounters with Christ that keep the Faithful faithful. We believe we are founded upon the Rock, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against us (Matthew 16:18).