

Workstream/Area of Inquiry/Topic 1: **Transparency around the nature and scale of abuse in the Diocese and Spiritual Reparation for the Victims.**

Notes from Dec 8th (Hopes & Expectations)

- Have felt grief, disillusionment, anger due to the clergy sex abuse issues and response from the Diocese and Bishop.
- Workgroup members feel compelled to do something to address the issues and to work to restore trust.
- Concerns about the Church having lost the next generation noted by numerous Workgroup members. Lost generation also goes beyond this crisis.
- Concerns about transparency on Diocese processes.
- Care for those who have been abused.
- What can we best do to help the victims and survivors of clergy sex abuse?
- What pastoral care is in place and moreover, what pastoral care should be in place to help victims/survivors? Listen to the victims and survivors as to what they need.
- Looking for facts and truth. Looking for more information, documents
- Family is hurt and want to fix it.
- The Diocese has failed Church members.
- Disappointment with Church structure, hypocrisy, clericalism
- Problems with the Bishop's actions, complicit
- We are the Church.
- What rights do laity have under Canon law? Laity to use lay power to bring about change.
- Survivor of clergy sex abuse (Tom) stresses the need to listen to the victims and survivors and to share his story with others.
- Clergy sex abuse has been covered up for generations by the Church. Time has come to demand change in response and laity to be involved in development of the change in the response.
- Church administration needs to be honest, humble. This has been lost.
- Address the media. Take control of the message. Publish on our website and produce our own content in order that the correct information is disseminated. Longform discussion rather than soundbites.
- Church is not capable of addressing the issue of clergy sex abuse. It needs to be handled by civil authorities.
- Need neutral entity to address these issues. Not those who have a conflict of interest.
- Need to not only restore trust but to create trust.
- Process needs to be fair for both the abused and the accused. Due process to be part of response.
- Concerns about arbitrariness of decisions made by Diocese and information that is forthcoming from the Diocese.

“What We Need to Learn, Know, Get:”

1. **Current Processes for Victims.** I think when I captured this, we were talking about the Diocesan process, but it seems like it would be good to know for each of the processes below, the basic steps, pros/cons, duties/standard/prof code of those involved, and the outcomes that are possible):
 - a. **Criminal** Process (Sheila will write up something simple for us on this)
 - b. **Civil** Process (Sheila/Mark will work together on this)
 - c. **Diocesan** (Dallas Charter/USCB) Process (I told the Organizing Committee that we need this, so stay tuned on that)
2. What are the **best practices for victims/survivors** in terms of providing support, healing, and pastoral response

Next Meetings:

1. When: Saturday, December 15th, 10-12noon,
Where: EduKids Training Room, 3601 Seneca Street (2nd floor), West Seneca
Topics:
 - Review of Bullet Points (see below)
 - Review of What We Need to Know/Learn/Get
 - Develop Potential Recommendations
2. When: Saturday, January 5th, 10-12noon
Where: TBD
Tentative Topic: Prioritizing Recommendations and Developing Action Plan
3. Tentatively -- When: Saturday, January 26th, 10-12noon
Where: TBD
Tentative Topic: Finalizing Recommendations and Action Plan

Bullets for Workgroup 1: Transparency around the nature and scale of abuse in the Diocese and Financial & Spiritual Reparation for the Victims.

1. This must involve complete disclosure of all priests who were the subject of allegations of abuse that were found credible or were the subject of settlements.
2. This may involve opening up the “secret archives” of the diocese as was done in Pennsylvania. If victims wish to remain anonymous, their names and other identifying information may be redacted.
3. Should we consider a “truth and reconciliation commission” to complete the reconciliation and healing and to restore trust and confidence?
4. How should investigations of allegations be handled? And what is/should be the role of the Diocesan Review Board on sex abuse cases?
5. As all resources expended for this purpose have come from the laity, who have contributed cash and property to the church, shouldn't we know what has been spent to date on the settlement of sexual abuse claims?
6. What are the appropriate norms to be put in place involving adults? Doesn't the definition of “vulnerable adult” need to be expanded?
7. Should we voluntarily adopt strict mandatory reporting for those employed by the Diocese, beyond what is currently required by New York Law?
8. Does the compensation fund established by the Diocese need to be re-thought to be more comprehensive? Should the deadline for filing claims be reopened?
9. At the same time, how do we protect innocent priests? Should there be a different process for allegations involving children and allegations involving adults?
10. How do we ensure due process for accused priests? This will require diocesan leadership that is trusted, confidence by all in the processes put in place to ferret out the truth and resistance to forces of scandal after any allegation, whether substantiated or not. How might this be accomplished even with an immediate report to law enforcement?