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ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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June 13, 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I wish to respond to certain misconceptions stemming from a deposition that I gave in a case regarding alleged sexual abuse by a priest in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis nearly thirty years ago. I wish to set the record straight.

I understand this situation has caused concern and frustration for many people, and for that I apologize. Abuse of any kind is a serious moral offense and a crime. As always, I encourage anyone who has suffered abuse to bring it to the attention of law enforcement first and foremost and additionally to the Archdiocese's Office of Child and Youth Protection so that justice and assistance can be rendered.

Sexual abuse of children is deplorable and is never to be tolerated. Actions speak louder than words and my record on this issue speaks for itself. I am committed to the safety of children and have shown compassion for victims. I have promoted and enacted codes of ethical conduct, extensive safe environment programs and ongoing training for clergy to heighten their awareness of this issue.

In the deposition last month, I misunderstood a series of questions that were presented to me. I wish to clarify that situation now. I fully understand, and have understood for my entire adult life, as I stated in other sections of this same deposition, sexual abuse is a grave evil and a criminal offense. I reiterate my commitment to protect children from sexual abuse. I support mandatory child abuse reporting laws, to which the Archdiocese strictly adheres.

I feel truly blessed to be your Archbishop, and I am grateful for your daily prayers and loving support. I renew my commitment to leading the Archdiocese of St. Louis in serving and protecting the entire community so that more people can come to know the love of Christ. Please pray with me that the blessings of the Holy Trinity be with all the people of St. Louis, especially those who may be suffering and in need.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson  
Archbishop of St. Louis