



May 16, 2019

## Reactions to new church abuse laws: a good step, but more are needed

*~by Brian Roewe, National Catholic Reporter*

Bishops welcomed it. Clergy abuse survivors said it didn't go far enough. Other Catholics saw it as a necessary, but not final, step.

Those were prevailing initial reactions to [new norms issued Thursday](#) by Pope Francis for addressing clergy sexual abuse. While many acknowledged the apostolic letter [Vos estis lux mundi](#) ("You are the light of the world") moved the church forward in addressing a scandal that has besieged the church more than three decades, reaching a new peak in the past year, there remained a sense the document was not sufficient alone and failed to address some core causes of the crisis.

"This is an important step forward for Catholics around the globe, particularly for abuse victims/survivors and their families," Kim Smolik, CEO of Leadership Roundtable, said in a statement. "While it does not yet address the breadth of culture change necessary to address the root causes of the crises of abuse and leadership failures, it does provide the foundation for bishop conferences to create meaningful accountability policies for their region."

The apostolic letter from Francis, issued *motu proprio* (on his own initiative), established new church laws concerning the reporting of sexual abuse and misconduct and how investigations are conducted.

It mandates new procedures requiring all priests and members of religious orders to report allegations of sexual abuse or its cover up to their bishop or superior. It establishes protections for those reporting abuse or cover-up allegations, and blocks attempts to silence accusers from speaking about their accusations. It directs archbishops to oversee investigations of other bishops within their ecclesiastical provinces, and sets a timeline of 90 days for reports to be made to the Vatican for final determination. **While it encourages lay involvement in such investigations, it does not obligate it.**



Pope Francis announces new church abuse laws. Photo credit: News.com.au

The new norms become effective June 1 and directs all dioceses worldwide within a year to establish reporting and investigating procedures. They represent the second [set of laws on abuse](#) issued by Francis since he held a first-of-its-kind summit in February, when leaders of episcopal conferences around the world came to the Vatican to address the issue of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

In a series of tweets, Newark, New Jersey Cardinal Joseph Tobin said that with the latest measures "Pope Francis reminds us that 'care of persons' must be a bishop's primary consideration" and that he "makes it clear that transparency and accountability are essential to the identify and mission of our Church."

### **Survivors' perspective**

While acknowledging some signs of improvement, abuse survivors and their advocates said the new measures did not go far enough. Specifically, they criticized the document for not creating a universal zero-tolerance policy for child sexual abuse or its cover-up — keeping the investigation process internal and not establishing clear penalties for those failing to report abuse or engaged in its cover-up.

"A lack of policies or procedures has never been the main problem in the clergy sex abuse scandal," the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) said in a statement. "Rather, it has been a lack of accountability for hierarchs who conceal sex crimes and a deficit of courage and willingness to take immediate, decisive action on those who have enabled those crimes to occur."

Peter Isley, a longtime SNAP leader and founding member of the global group Ending Clergy Abuse, said no zero-tolerance policy was perhaps the most glaring omission.

[BishopAccountability.org](#), which has tracked the clergy abuse crisis since the early 2000s, called the apostolic letter "not nearly enough," and pointed to what it deemed "three serious weaknesses": the lack of stated penalties for those who don't adhere to the norms; the lack of mandated transparency to the public; and the lack of a requirement of permanent removal from ministry for abusive clergy.

"This is not the bold action that's desperately needed. A law without penalties is not a law at all — it's a suggestion," the Massachusetts-based organization said in a statement. To read the entire article: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/accountability/reactions-new-church-abuse-laws-good-step-more-are-needed>

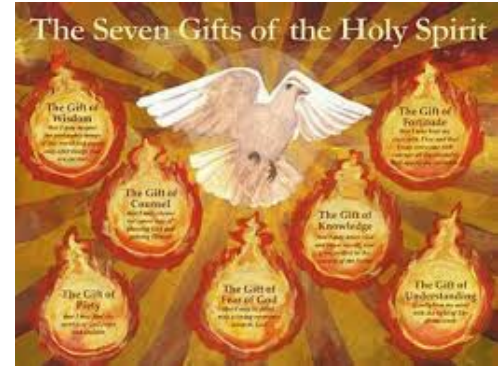


Pope Francis reviews documents during the meeting in the Vatican in February on the sex abuse crisis. (CNS/Vatican media)



# Confirmation Preparations

120 students and their catechists from the Church of the Holy Spirit in Chicago spent a day in retreat at Cabrini Retreat Center in preparation for Confirmation. Largely Hispanic, most of the students are first generation Americans and some are immigrants themselves. Theirs is a two year preparation program and the retreat is the culmination of that program. Students range in age from 13-17 and formed mixed small “communities” for the day, which was centered on Scripture and the Holy Spirit.



Performing skits that illustrated the gifts of the Holy Spirit was a teaching and learning moment for all the students.

A concrete learning experience helped them to clarify their understanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit: each community was assigned one of the gifts and they were asked to come up with a brief skit that would express the gift in their everyday lives. Sharing their skits with the large group gave all the students the opportunity to learn more about the practical application of all the gifts. It was truly an enriching day for all participants. ~ submitted by Sr. Cathy Fedewa, CSFN



The students preparing for Confirmation arrive at their home parish following their preparatory retreat at the Cabrini Retreat Center in Des Plaines, IL.

# Cabrini High School Students

## Honor Distinguished Educators

Four elementary school teachers were honored on May 8, 2019 by Cabrini High School students. The Distinguished Educator Award is presented annually to teachers who have done an outstanding job preparing their students to succeed in high school. This year's honorees are:

- Jodi Epp, Christian Brothers School, nominated by Mary Miller '22
- Lynette Jones, St. Leo the Great School, nominated by Cydney St. Junior '20
- Ximena Lopez, St. Edward the Confessor School, nominated by Emma Williams '22
- Kevin Loup, St. Rosalie School, nominated by Makenna Borne '23



From left: CHS students and their elementary school mentors Cydney St. Junior and Lynette Jones; Makenna Borne and Kevin Loup; Mary Miller and Jodi Epp; and Emma Williams and Ximena Lopez.

Each year, Cabrini students who demonstrate outstanding character and hold a GPA of 3.5 or higher are given the opportunity to nominate an elementary school teacher who has had a positive impact on their lives. In the nomination, students are asked to share why they selected the teachers and the impact the nominee has had on their lives and preparation for high school and beyond.

Cabrini High School President, Jack Truxillo, addressed the Distinguished Educators and guests, “You have made such an impression and had such an impact on your former students that they chose to go through the nominating process. That in itself speaks volumes. Cabrini’s Distinguished Educator Award honors those elementary teachers who have shaped and prepared the outstanding young women who come to Cabrini High School.” ~submitted by *Katelyn Ehrhardt, Cabrini High School*





## Continuing Education...

This week, Sr. Genet Henok, MSC, Director of Formation, accompanied two MSC novices from Ethiopia, Sr. Ayantu Abera, MSC and Sr. Tigist Loha, MSC to the Cabrini Cottage on the campus of Cabrini University in Radnor, PA for several days of formation. The topics that were covered were the founding, history and traditions of Cabrini University. PowerPoint presentations and interactive learning sessions were interspersed with campus tours designed to bring the history alive.



Dr. Nick Rademacher (c.) joined from MSC novices Sr. Ayantu (l.) and Sr. Tigist (2<sup>nd</sup> l.) and Sr. Genet Henok, MSC (2<sup>nd</sup> r.) and Sr. Grace Waters, MSC for a wide-ranging presentation on American Catholicism.

Dr. Nick Rademacher, Professor of Religious Studies, joined the sisters presenting two sessions on Contemporary Issues in American Catholicism.

Rounding out their visit in Radnor was a lively conversation on vocational discernment.


We surely look forward to their return visit and the opportunity to engage in further cultural exchanges.

While on campus the sisters paid a visit to the University's Wolfington Center for Peace and Justice. Taking time for a photo are from left: Campus Minister Rosa Altomare, Sr. Ayantu, Sr. Tigist, Wolfington Center staffer and Cabrini alumna Megan Norris, Sr. Genet and Wolfington Center Executive Director Dr. Ray Ward.

Photo below: Cabrini University is all about lifelong learning and lifelong friendships. Former and current faculty and staff gathered last Friday for their annual end of year luncheon.



# Prayer Requests



May the waters  
of peace flow gently  
through your spirit.

## ***Cabrini (College) University graduate***

A graduate of Cabrini (College) University is in need of our prayers for a return to full health. Please pray that this person accepts the most appropriate treatment for healing.

## ***Cabrini High School Community requests prayers***

Please keep Ardley Hanemann, our CHS former president and Lenny Grabert, father of Shannon Grabert '94 and member of the President's Advisory Council in your prayers. Both gentlemen are experiencing health issues and have asked for the prayers of the extended Cabrinian Community.

## ***Sr. John Giani, MSC***

Sr. John remains hospitalized at Mt. Sinai/Beth Israel Hospital in New York City. Sr. John had a special procedure on Tuesday, May 14 and all went well. A full recovery is anticipated.

## ***Patti Larkins***

Patty Larkins, sister-in-law to former Cabrini Lay Missionary and Cabrini (College) University alumna Robin Larkins, is in need of our prayers. Patti will be undergoing heart surgery tomorrow, May 17<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Patti's mother was rushed to the hospital yesterday in need of a blood transfusion. Prayers would be appreciated for healing, strength, and successful outcomes for both women and for all those involved with their care, especially Patti's husband, Tom.

## ***Sr. Martha Lopez, MSC***

Please pray for the swift and uneventful recovery of Sr. Martha who underwent a surgical procedure yesterday. Please pray that she will soon be restored to full health.

## ***Sr. Lucy Panettieri, MSC***

Please keep Sr. Lucy in your prayers as she anticipates surgery on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Pray that all will go well with her procedure.

## ***Sr. Angelina Randazzo, MSC***

Sr. Angie has asked our prayers for a special intention. Let us accompany her with our prayers.

## ***Mary Young***

Your prayers are asked for Mary Young, the sister of Sr. Tommasina Lanski, MSC who will begin dialysis treatment tomorrow.