

Sexual Abuse

In our scripture readings this weekend we heard the story of the man cured of blindness. He spoke the words, “I was blind but now I see.” With that gift of sight came the ability to see the beauty of creation, but also the ugliness that sin afflicts upon our world.

This week we also read St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. “You were once in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord...Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light.”

All around us today darkness is being brought to light as we hear stories from Boston, Palm Beach, New Hampshire, and even from St. Thomas Aquinas School here in Baltimore. Exposing this darkness has brought great pain in our Church.

When I became the Archbishop of Baltimore, God placed in my care the spiritual lives of the people of this Archdiocese. It is a gift that I cherish. I promise as your Archbishop that I will do all in my power to protect our people from such abuse. Included in this edition of The Catholic Review is the policy regarding sexual abuse used in this Archdiocese. Please read it.

The darkness has been exposed and these are hard times for our Church. These are days when we need to sink our roots deeper into our faith in the Lord of light. In doing this we expose the light:

- The goodness of so many of our priests serving the faithful daily in parishes, hospitals, schools, prisons, and mental institutions.
- The faithfulness of religious sisters and brothers teaching our children,

ministering to the sick, the shut-in, the poor, the immigrant, and the disenfranchised.

- The dedication of our Catholic schoolteachers, who give up the lucrative salaries offered by some public school systems and give their time, talent and energy to the children of this Archdiocese.
- The determination of our seminarians who are responding to their call at a time when some out there mock that call to priesthood.
- The faith of the people of this Archdiocese whose faithfulness brings life and health to the Church of Baltimore.

Pray for me and pray with me. Let us join together to give praise to our God, to rejoice in the gift of our Catholic faith, to commit ourselves daily to walk together each day as children of light always working to produce “every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth.”