

Vatican reviewing McCarrick case, vows to pursue truth no matter what

VATICAN CITY — Promising a thorough review of how the Vatican handled allegations of sexual misconduct by former Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, the Vatican acknowledged that what happened may fall short of the procedures that are in place today.

“The Holy See is conscious that, from the examination of the facts and of the circumstances, it may emerge that choices were taken that would not be consonant with a contemporary approach to such issues. However, as Pope Francis has said: ‘We will follow the path of truth wherever it may lead,’” the Vatican said in statement released Oct. 6.

Renewing its commitment to uncovering the truth, the Vatican also said that information gathered from its investigation as well as “a further thorough study” of its archives regarding the former cardinal will be released “in due course.”

“Both abuse and its cover-up can no longer be tolerated and a different treatment for bishops who have committed or covered up abuse, in fact represents a form of clericalism that is no longer acceptable,” the Vatican said.

According to the statement, the pope ordered a preliminary investigation by the Archdiocese of New York after an allegation that Archbishop McCarrick abused a teenager 47 years ago; the allegation subsequently was found to be credible.

Pope Francis, the Vatican said, accepted Archbishop McCarrick’s resignation from the College of Cardinals after “grave indications emerged during the course of the investigation.”

In the weeks after the allegations were made public, another man came forward claiming he was abused as a child by Archbishop McCarrick and several former seminarians have spoken out about being sexually harassed by the cardinal at a

beach house he had.

The Vatican statement comes more than a month after Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, former nuncio to the United States, released an 11-page “testimony” claiming that church officials, including Pope Francis, failed to act on the accusations of abuse by Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick.

In his statement Aug. 25, Archbishop Vigano said the Vatican was informed as early as 2000 — when he was an official at the Secretariat of State — of allegations that Archbishop McCarrick “shared his bed with seminarians.” Archbishop Vigano said the Vatican heard the allegations from the U.S. nuncios at the time: Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, who served from 1998 to 2005, and Archbishop Pietro Sambi, who served from 2005 to 2011.

A 2006 letter obtained by Catholic News Service Sept. 7 suggested that then-Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, the former Vatican substitute for general affairs, acknowledged allegations made in 2000 by Father Boniface Ramsey, pastor of St. Joseph’s Church Yorkville in New York City, concerning Archbishop McCarrick.

Archbishop Vigano had claimed that Pope Benedict XVI later “imposed on Cardinal McCarrick sanctions similar to those now imposed on him by Pope Francis.”

“I do not know when Pope Benedict took these measures against McCarrick, whether in 2009 or 2010, because in the meantime I had been transferred to the Governorate of Vatican City State, just as I do not know who was responsible for this incredible delay,” he said.

Then-Cardinal McCarrick, he claimed, “was to leave the seminary where he was living” which, at the time, was the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Hyattsville, Maryland, and was also “forbidden to celebrate Mass in public, to participate in public meetings, to give lectures, to travel, with the obligation of dedicating himself to a life of prayer and penance.”

However, photos and videos during the time of the alleged sanctions gave evidence that Archbishop McCarrick appeared in public with Archbishop Vigano and continued to concelebrate at large public Masses and visit the Vatican and Pope

Benedict himself.

Almost a week after issuing his original accusations, Archbishop Vigano modified his claim and said Pope Benedict made the sanctions private, perhaps “due to the fact that he (Archbishop McCarrick) was already retired, maybe due to the fact that he (Pope Benedict) was thinking he was ready to obey.”

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