



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

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Response to the McCarrick Report

The 450+ page report issued by Pope Francis outlines who knew what about Theodore McCarrick, when they knew it, and how they responded to that knowledge, or not.

After reading it, I feel like I need a shower, and that I need to apologize for another bishop, or I should say former bishop. I am sorry, so sorry.

McCarrick took advantage of his position to victimize minors and adults. He led a double life. He held others to one standard, and himself to a much, much lower one.

He looked for advancement. He lived for the limelight. He used other people's money to ingratiate himself to those in power. He used other people for his own gratification.

And just as bad: others knew, and said nothing, did nothing. Someone said that silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to act is to act. God will not hold us guiltless.

I am sorry for the bad example of bishops, but also because Catholics in parishes likely have to experience the derision from people more directly than I do; I am sorry.

It is a sordid tale as old as humanity: the evil one using the allure of power and fame, money and sex to charm weak human beings into sin.

But that doesn't make McCarrick or any of us less responsible for giving in to temptation, or the harm caused to the victims of our sin, or the scandal we give.

At least one consequence of the report should be changes made to the vetting process for the selection of bishops (I have opinions, but no one is asking).

Another consequence that is in keeping with my pay grade, and yours, is to be the *ecclesia semper reformanda est*, Latin for the *Church always in need of reform*.

There is always a need for all of us to reform ourselves, to conform ourselves more closely to the mind and heart, charity and humility, mercy and service of Jesus.

God, have mercy on us, and help us.

Archbishop Michael Jackels

Archbishop of Dubuque
