

Fr. O'Connor's Homily, September 2, 2018

I speak to you today with a heavy heart. The news about Theodore McCarrick and the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report has stunned us and all of this has been compounded by Archbishop Vigano's accusations directed at Pope Francis.

First of all I want you to know that I have a deep, deep love for our Church as you do. Secondly, I have a deep respect and love for our Pope. He may not be perfect but he is a good man, courageous, and in my judgement, most trustworthy. I will follow him and I encourage you to do the same. He hasn't spoken yet about Archbishop Vigano's accusation but I believe he will do so.

Some years ago, Pope Francis appointed a Committee to review and advise the Pope on matters of sexual abuse. The committee is headed up by an American, Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston. I assume the Pope will respond to the allegations of negligence made against him after consultation with this committee.

Also, we have heard from Bishop Scharfenberger and he offers us his understanding and encouragement and prayers.

We are a church of saints and sinners and always will be. But we will always have Jesus and His Holy Spirit as our Guide.

Even at our earliest beginnings all but one of Jesus' disciples abandoned Him. St. Peter even denied Him three times.

I'm wondering what all of you are thinking and feeling this morning- perhaps confusion, anger, sadness, fear, betrayal.

In all four Gospels, including today's Gospel, Jesus warns us again and again not to set ourselves in judgement over others. But how can we not make judgements? How can we not be disgusted?

As for me, I know I can't sink into all that darkness, all that self-righteousness. Especially now I must open my mind and heart to Jesus' words, His commands about judgement, self-righteousness. We all have to make our own journey through all of this- but please pray.

We must pray for our Church, for our Holy Father, for our bishops and priests and for one another. Could we pray once more the Gloria and please pay attention to the words.

God have mercy on us!!

