



Aug. 16, 2018

OAKLAND -- Bishop Michael Barber has issued the following statement regarding recent revelations of clergy sexual abuse, including by bishops and cardinals. The statement is provided below in English and Spanish:

"The news we have been receiving about the horrible actions of priests, bishops and cardinals has stunned and disgusts me. Those who have harmed children and vulnerable adults must be held accountable. The bishops who refused to stop this immoral and criminal behavior must also be held accountable. I am shamed by the actions of these men and have vowed to work with all people of good will to make our Diocese a safe place for all.

"To that end, we have policies and procedures in place mandating that every person who serves in our Diocese, whether clergy, religious, staff or lay volunteer, receives training in how to identify and stop predatory behavior. The Diocese of Oakland has a zero tolerance policy to the sexual abuse of minors on the part of anyone who serves the church. We also have staff which respond to each allegation of abuse, and have a loving and responsive team to assist survivors of clerical sexual abuse. We have an independent Diocesan Review Board composed of lay experts in psychology, police investigators, retired judges and abuse survivors, which examines complaints of misbehavior. I follow their recommendations.

"I welcome the initiative of Cardinal DiNardo, President of the US Bishops Conference, whose August 16 statement [*is attached*](#), to establish an investigation into questions surrounding bishops' accountability, an opening of new and confidential reporting channels for complaints, proper independence and lay, not clerical, leadership of the process.

"The love of Christ compels us to be better models of Jesus' love, mercy, and healing. We must never violate the trust placed in us. As Bishop of Oakland, I promise there will be consequences for those who do."