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Statement Following the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report on Abuse

The Pennsylvania grand jury report issued on August 14, 2018 regarding abuse by clergy has made a traumatic impact on the Church and its communities. The disturbing details have reopened wounds for all Catholics, especially victims of abuse. We share in the sorrow, discouragement, and even the anger that so many have expressed in response to this overwhelming report. The failures of our ministers in the Church have compounded our profound shame and regret.

Three of the priests named in the report were Jesuits of the Maryland Province:

John Duggan – Removed from public ministry in 2002. (Deceased)

Arthur Long – Dismissed from the Society of Jesus in 1992. (Deceased)

Neil McLaughlin – Removed from public ministry in 2006 and currently lives at a Jesuit community in a monitored environment.

The Maryland Province of Jesuits in each of these cases received reports of abuse, in some cases years after the abuse originally occurred. Although steps were taken to restrict and ultimately remove from ministry or even dismiss from the Society those with credible allegations against them, our initial responses at the time the abuses were first reported were not as urgent as they should have been by today's standards and did not incorporate practices that the hard lessons of recent years have taught us.

We are committed to the protection of minors and vulnerable adults in the conduct of our ministry. We make all required reports to civil authorities regarding any accusations of sexual abuse involving a minor and employ a strict zero-tolerance policy. The Jesuits encourage anyone who suspects abuse by any clergy or employee of the province to contact local civil authorities and/or the provincial's office of the Maryland Province.

The province works proactively to ensure the protection of minors through clear and comprehensive policies for ethical conduct in ministry, supervision, responding to accusations, and transparent communication. Our procedures for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults are accredited by Praesidium, an independent third-party agency that consults with organizations that serve youth and vulnerable populations.

We continue to pray for the victims of sexual abuse and for those working with us to protect our children.