



ST. THOMAS MORE
NEWMAN CENTER

The Roman Catholic Campus Ministry for The Ohio State University
A Ministry of the Paulist Fathers

September 24, 2018

Dear Newman Center Community,

Thank you to all of you who attended our first listening session on Wednesday, Aug. 29 concerning the clergy sexual abuse crisis in the Church. There were about 70 people in attendance. While the subject matter was very painful and difficult for us to discuss, it was very important for us to do so. Too long has the Church not openly talked about this grievously sinful and criminal failing to protect the most vulnerable in our Church and society.

During that first listening session we gathered in small groups and shared our anger, pain, sadness and desire to find ways of supporting each other. In our large group responses, we heard the need for more clarity about the steps for reporting abuse. In response, we have published those in our bulletin and on our website. As we listened, it became clear that many people were not aware of the policies that have been in place to protect all God's children since the Bishop's Dallas Charter of 2002 that called for every diocese in the United States to involve lay people on review boards to look into any allegation of clergy sexual abuse of minors and to educate all Church employees and volunteers who work with children on preventative measures to take in protecting children from abuse. Since 2002 these policies have been improved upon. All clergy and staff, as well as volunteers in the church who might have any contact with children undergo background checks and attend workshops on the topic of Protecting God's Children. We will be offering one of these workshops to anyone who wishes to be better informed as to how to prevent child sexual abuse not only in our church but in our society. The workshop is scheduled for **Saturday, Nov. 10** from **9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Participants can register online for free at **www.virtus.org**.

A number of people expressed a desire to continue to talk about ways of supporting each other and ways in which we can help our Church to be the holy, catholic, apostolic Church Jesus calls us to be. Toward that end we will have another listening session on The Feast of St. Francis, **Thursday Oct. 4** at **7 p.m.** Beyond these listening sessions, I and the rest of the Newman Center staff are here for anyone who wishes to talk with us about this crisis or any other issue.

In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he reminds us that we are all part of the Body of Christ, when one part suffers we all suffer. Let us continue to pray for all the victims of sexual abuse, in our church and in our society. Let us continue to pray for each other as we seek to transform ourselves and our church to be the Church Jesus calls us to be.

Fr. Ed Nowak, C.S.P.
Director