



Archdiocese of New Orleans

Office of the Archbishop

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To Fr. Jonathan Hemelt, Pastor and parishioners of Our Lady of the Rosary and the people of God in our Archdiocese

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

This communication is to discuss with you allegations of sexual abuse by George Brignac. Mr. Brignac served at Our Lady of the Rosary after his diaconate ordination as a deacon from 1976 until 1988. The recent report relates to an allegation that occurred during this time period almost 40 years ago but reported to the Archdiocese of New Orleans four months ago.

It is noted that there were other allegations and criminal charges brought against Mr. Brignac in the past, of which he was acquitted or charges refused by the District Attorney's Office at that time. Archbishop Hannan publicly removed him from ministry in 1988. According to our records and files he worked as a teacher at St. Francis Cabrini School, St. John Vianney Prep, and St. Matthew the Apostle all in the Archdiocese of New Orleans prior to his ordination. He served as a deacon and teacher at Our Lady of the Rosary from 1976 to 1988 and for a time at Cabrini High School until he was removed from ministry. He had no other assignments. Since 1988 he has not served as a deacon in a parish, school, or any ministry of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Our policy in regards to the Protection of Children and Young People is online and outlines the steps and processes taken when an allegation is received and is in alignment with the US Catholic Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Upon receiving the lawsuit detailing the allegations, we acted quickly and pastorally according to these policies and practices. No one should suffer abuse and especially not by a church leader.

I am firmly committed to healing for victims of abuse. I have met with abuse victims and will always make the offer to meet with those who come forward with allegations of abuse. I am also committed to continuing to be transparent in the handling of allegations of abuse. I pray daily for those who have suffered abuse, especially those affected by clergy.

If anyone has any information regarding abuse by a member of the clergy or anyone serving in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, I encourage you to come forward and report this. We take allegations seriously and investigate them thoroughly. We, and I personally, are committed to making our parishes, schools, and ministries a safe place for all, especially the young church. We desire to provide real opportunities for healing for those hurt by the Catholic Church. I extend my pastoral care and compassion to Fr. Hemelt and parishioners of Our Lady of the Rosary, Holy Rosary School community, St. Matthew the Apostle School community, and Cabrini High School community.

To all who have been abused, I pray that you know the healing of Christ. I lift you to the Lord that you may know God's peace.

Wishing you God's blessings, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans