



Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

August 29, 2019

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of Joy Parish:

It is my sad duty to share with you that an accusation was received through the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program that one of your former pastors, Father Robert Cedolia, allegedly sexually abused a minor in the 1990s, while he served as pastor of Our Lady of Joy Parish in Holiday Park. Father Cedolia has vehemently denied sexually abusing anyone. Prior to this, no other allegation of sexual abuse against Father Cedolia has come to the diocese. Father Cedolia has been a priest in active ministry for 41 years.

In response to this allegation, and in accordance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the policies of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Father Cedolia has been placed on administrative leave. Removing Father Cedolia from ministry does not imply guilt. It is intended to safeguard the course of justice while preserving the rights of everyone involved, including both the person against whom an allegation has been made and the person who made the allegation.

When such an allegation has been made, Church law and diocesan policy mandate specific procedures. One is to immediately notify the appropriate civil authorities, which has been done. Another is to bring the information before the Independent Review Board, which will advise me on whether Father Cedolia is suitable for future ministry.

Father Cedolia has taken up a temporary residence while this allegation is looked into further. While he is on administrative leave he is not allowed to engage in public ministry. He cannot administer the sacraments, dress in clerical attire or identify himself as a priest. If a determination is made that Father Cedolia did what he is accused of, those restrictions will become permanent. If it is determined that the allegation is unfounded, all that is possible will be done to restore Father Cedolia's reputation and return him to ministry.

If you have information that could shed further light on this matter, please call the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-888-808-1235 or contact the civil authorities. Anyone who has been harmed by someone representing the Church should inform the diocese so that we can protect others and offer healing.

Recognizing that this is a painful time for everyone concerned, I ask that you join me in praying for the person who has brought this allegation forward, for Father Cedolia, for his most recent parishes of Saint Clare, Holy Spirit, Saint Thomas à Becket and Saint Elizabeth, for those who will help make a determination in this matter and for me, your bishop. We need to support one another in the days ahead. May our words, our deeds and our prayers always reflect the healing love of Jesus.

Grateful for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

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Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

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