

**Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., released the following letter to employees of the Philadelphia Archdiocese Aug. 14.**

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you know, there has been much media attention leading up to today's announcement from the State Attorney General regarding six dioceses throughout the Commonwealth. The content is difficult to read and painful for all of us – most especially survivors and their loved ones. The Church in Philadelphia continues to express regret and sorrow for that pain and remains committed to providing support and assistance aimed at healing.

It is important to note that the Archdiocese was not subject to the grand jury investigation and is not part of this report. However, our own past experience with local grand juries in 2005 and 2011 is likely to be referenced in news coverage.

Over the past 15 years, the Archdiocese has prioritized its responsibility to create safe environments for the children and young people entrusted to its care. Prevention of abuse is part of our Church's culture and our zero-tolerance policy dictates our aggressive response, which includes immediately notifying law enforcement regarding any allegation of sexual abuse or other criminal activity.

The Church has accepted responsibility for the abuse that occurred within its ranks – no matter when the abuse occurred. In that vein, it's important to note that the vast majority of reports received by the Archdiocesan Office of Investigations since its inception concern behavior that was alleged to have occurred several decades ago.

There have been less than half a dozen allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by Archdiocesan clergy related to the period 2005-present day. Of that handful, all of which were reported to law enforcement, one allegation was substantiated. That priest was immediately removed from ministry by the Archdiocese when it learned of the allegation and he was later convicted on federal child pornography charges.

During this same time period, approximately 100,000 Archdiocesan clergy, staff, and volunteers have received Safe Environment and Mandatory Reporter training programs to help them recognize, respond to, and report suspected abuse.

Those facts, along with the significant support we provide survivors of abuse and their families, are rarely acknowledged or reported. Last year alone our Archdiocese committed \$1.7 million in these efforts. To provide transparency and to further assist in healing, we've published the names of all clergy with substantiated claims of abuse against them — both living and deceased — on [our Archdiocesan website](#) for several years.

Please know of my gratitude for your generous dedication to our Church and her mission. Everyone in our Archdiocese plays a part in the ongoing efforts to protect God's children. I have [attached our official statement](#) regarding the grand jury report. It illustrates the extent of our commitment to rooting out the societal evil of child abuse as well as assisting survivors and their loved ones.

In addition, I encourage you to view a newly established website [AOPpledgetoProtect](#). It tells the story of where we have been, where we are, and where we are headed in our work to create safe environments and support survivors.

In a world where the evil of child sexual abuse infiltrates every facet of society, I know that our work to combat it will go on – permanently.

