

Dear Members of the University Community –

Stemming from our commitment to transparency, the members of the Task Force on Healing, Reconciliation and Hope would like to update the University community on our work thus far.

When first convened in October of 2018, Task Force members expressed a desire to hear from various campus constituencies about their concerns, ideas and recommendations before proceeding with program development. Accordingly, in November and December 2018, we hosted student and staff/faculty feedback sessions and administered a campus-wide survey. In January, Task Force members reviewed the results, reading every comment, identifying the main topics that respondents want the campus to consider, and confirming three basic methods for considering these topics.

Without claiming the results to be representative of the entire campus community, we are grateful to the 42 members of our community who attended feedback sessions and to the 237 individuals who responded to the online survey. Responses to the closed-ended survey questions are presented below:

Q1: Are you aware of the Church's official response to the Clergy sex abuse scandal at:
(check all that apply)

Local Parish	46%
Diocese	67%
Vatican	54%
Unaware	20%

Q2: How are you feeling about the Church's response to the Clergy sexual abuse scandal?

Very satisfied	2%
Satisfied	13%
Neutral	34%
Dissatisfied	29%
Very dissatisfied	22%

Q3: How has the Clergy sexual abuse scandal affected your faith?

Weakened	36%
No change	59%
Strengthened	5%

Open-ended questions from the online survey were coded as consistently as possible. After several iterations of review, discussion and refinement of categories, we identified the following five themes and approaches recommended to address them. The conversations at both the student and staff/faculty feedback sessions, for the most part, reflected these main themes as well.

Themes/Topics to be addressed:

- The effects of sexual trauma on survivors;
- Church policies and responses to sexual abuse at the diocesan and universal levels;
- Clericalism as a contributing theological and cultural factor;
- The spiritual and moral authority of the Church in the wake of the Grand Jury Report;
- Justice for survivors of sexual abuse and the possibility of reconciliation.

Approaches to be pursued to address themes

- Education through talks, panels, and open fora;
- Direct means of support for survivors and prevention of abuse;
- Dedicated prayer, liturgies, and other religious rituals.

As it relates to the results, it is noteworthy that many respondents indicated that they were unsure about what can or should be done, which reflects the confusion and powerlessness that many of us feel, including the members of the Task Force. We also acknowledge that a few respondents indicated a desire to see some artistic response as part of upcoming programming. It was a relatively small voice, but Task Force members are convinced that it is a crucial component of how a university might respond to the crisis.

In response to feedback from our community, we have thus far scheduled three main programs for Spring 2019. Details will follow as the events draw near.

- **Tuesday, February 26, 4-5:30PM in TDC #405:** A gathering to share thoughts, engage ideas, learn from and support those directly and indirectly impacted by clergy abuse.
- **Date TBD:** During Lent, the University community will gather to pray for the healing of victims of clergy sexual abuse, for their advocates, and for our wounded Church.
- **Wednesday, April 10, 7-8:30PM in Leahy #235:** A presentation by Dr. Christine Courtois regarding sexual abuse trauma and healing.

In the coming months, the Task Force will focus on programming for the 2019-20 academic year. As topics are identified, members of the Task Force will reach out to experts on our campus for help in organizing specific events.

The Healing, Reconciliation and Hope Task Force [website](#) is now live and full of information and resources. We greatly appreciate your interaction and ask that you continue to share your ideas with members of the Task Force. By the end of Spring 2020, our collective efforts hopefully will have inspired a thoughtful campus witness and reflection on healing, reconciliation, and hope, especially for survivors of abuse and for all of us affected by the crisis.

Thank you,

The Task Force on Healing, Reconciliation and Hope