

Where do We Go From Here...

At the Parish town hall meetings that took place on September 2 and 6, parishioners provided their personal thoughts on the current stage of the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. Many responses indicated a desire for action, with such responses falling into several categories. Having examined those categories, the Parish Council would like to evaluate the priorities of our parishioners.

What this survey is:

a means to assess the strongest passions of the Parish community and to inform our next steps

What this survey is not:

an exhaustive list of every possible action that we might eventually take, a substitute for well-informed discussion, or the final occasion on which your input will be requested

Instructions:

Demands for change are divided below into I) overarching goals for the Catholic Church and II) specific actions for our Parish. Place three stars next to the most important overarching goal, two stars next to the second most important, and one star next to the third most important. Then do the same for the top three specific actions.¹

I. Overarching Goals for the Church as a whole:

	revision of power dynamics in the Church (including those between the hierarchy and the rest of the Church; between ordained and non-ordained Catholics; and those based on gender, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, marital status, and other identities)
	increased transparency within the Church, specifically pertaining to the issues of sex abuse by priests or religious and its past concealment
	evolution of the Church's theology of sexuality
	revised definition of authentic pastoral leadership
	education on topics of sex abuse (whether or not perpetrated by priests or religious)
	support for victims of sex abuse

II. Specific Actions to be undertaken by our Parish or its members:

	communicate our concerns to the hierarchy, including demands that dioceses provide greater transparency into reports of abuse (e.g., by advocating for a lay presence/input at the annual meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in November)
	call for the American bishops to collectively offer their resignations
	investigate, review, and discuss the Archdiocese's current policies concerning allegations of sexual misconduct
	withhold contributions to the Archdiocese until acceptable actions have been taken
	advocate that the issue be addressed through the courts: through criminal prosecution or civil litigation (including lobbying for investigation by the Maryland Attorney General)
	join with other parishes in our Archdiocese as well as national organizations to take further action and advocate for change
	develop ways to support survivors of abuse and those feeling the emotional and spiritual effects of the revelations of abuse or its concealment
	host one or more discussions or lectures on the root causes of sexual abuse, the psycho-spiritual impacts of abuse and/or how to enable healing for survivors of abuse
	create and maintain an information repository (including hard facts on abuse and responses by the Church, thoughtful opinion pieces, and networking resources)

¹ This is a "forced choice" activity. By design, you are being asked to exclude certain suggestions you might find important so that we might discern which items are most important to the community as a whole. Few of these suggestions are exclusive of each other, and we will likely build on these with others that emerge as we progress. Again, the items enumerated are recurrent themes in the responses already provided by Parishioners. If you have other thoughts that do not fall into the general categories below, please describe them on the back of this page.