

**STATEMENT OF FR. WILLIAM KUNISCH  
ON THE PENNSYLVANIA GRAND JURY REPORT OF CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

The new revelations of clergy sexual abuse of children that surfaced in the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report this week are horrific in their detail and number. As a Catholic I am angry and dismayed. As a priest, I am ashamed and profoundly disappointed by the Church to protect her own children. My heart goes out to the victims and their families.

While most of these crimes occurred many years ago, and since 2002 we have put in place new screening and background checks for priests, deacons, and seminarians, better human formation in our seminaries, policies to create safe environments in our parishes for our children, and more accountability of those in authority, it is clear we still have a long way to go toward being a healthy Church.

I believe we have to look inward and ask ourselves what it is in our belief system or our Catholic culture that perpetuates such unhealthy and destructive behavior. I pray that, with the Holy Father's leadership, we will have the courage to do such an ecclesial examination of conscience.

Our efforts toward healing and renewal should involve not just clergy and religious, but more than ever, the laity, women and men, our best theologians, and the best science of the day. We need all hands on deck to pray, study, and discern the path forward at this time in our life together. It is helpful to remember there have been great reformers in our Church's history such as St. Francis of Assisi and St. Teresa of Avila whom God raised up to rebuild the Church amid corruption and demoralization. We are aided by their prayers and example today.

As this scandal continues to shake the Church to its foundation, let us not forget that our foundation is Jesus Christ. We place our hope and trust in Him who alone can bring forth good from evil and shine as a light in darkness.

Given August 18, 2018