



Secretariat For Charity

In response to the pandemic and in an ever-greater effort to meet the expanding needs of our time, on February 2, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, Bishop James F. Checchio announced the establishment of a new secretariat in the Diocese of Metuchen – the Secretariat for Charity. The new secretariat will further integrate the mission shared by Catholic Charities, our parishes, schools and other institutions.

A secretariat is a grouping of related ministries within the diocesan curia, which supports the bishop in his shepherding responsibilities.

The Secretariat for Charity will be under the direction and leadership of Anthony P. Kearns III, Esq., diocesan chancellor, who will serve as its Chief Executive Officer. In his role, he will have direct oversight over Catholic Charities, whose work will be administered by the Executive Director and the Board; the Campaign for Works of Mercy; Catholic Relief Services; and other charitable endeavors across the diocese.

The secretariat will:

- Increase and emphasize the good work of Catholic Charities in all parishes, schools and institutions across the Diocese of Metuchen
- Encourage all people to practice the Corporal Works of Mercy as taught by Jesus and promoted in Catholic Social Teaching
- Continue to serve all God's people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, or economic status, living and working in Middlesex, Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within your wounds conceal me.
Do not permit me to be parted from you.
From the evil foe protect me.
At the hour of my death call me.
And bid me come to you,
to praise you with all your saints for ever and ever.

Amen.



DIOCESE OF
METUCHEN

Sanctified, Strengthened & Sent

An overview of how the Diocese of Metuchen is continuing to responsibly move forward in faith

Continued Steps Toward Responsible Financial Management

“The Church is responsible for the financial resources which have been entrusted to it. This responsibility includes safeguarding Church assets, exercising prudence in financial matters, accountability to those who provide monetary support to the Church and to regulatory authorities, and compliance with all civil regulations.”

(Diocesan Financial Management: A Guide to Best Practices from the USCCB Committee on Budget and Finance)

In order to ensure this responsible financial management throughout the diocese, Bishop Checchio has directed that we take further steps for financial integrity, accountability and transparency. The Diocese of Metuchen:

- Works with EthicsPoint, a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool that allows employees and others the ability to anonymously report suspected financial malfeasance in our diocesan administration, parishes, schools and other institutions
- Relies on a diocesan finance council, which includes six lay professionals, two priests and one deacon, to monitor diocesan finances, review the diocesan annual audit and parish financial audits, and to fulfill the requirements of canon law
- Employs the use of an audit committee to oversee and provide guidance on internal control and accounting matters
- Addresses parish and school financial operations through the newly-established Office of Parish Financial Services
- Requires all parishes to have an active finance council that meets regularly and requires that they submit meeting minutes to the diocese
- Obligates parishes to comply with a two- or three-year audit cycle
- Mandates that parishes submit to the diocese their annual parish financial report, signed by the pastor, parish finance council and lay trustees
- Calls for parishes to adhere to the diocese’s policy of handling and control of collections
- Uses donations given to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, Catholic Charities, Catholic schools in the diocese, and donations given for a specific ministry or apostolate, exclusively for their intended purposes

Remembering our Church’s History and Moving Forward with Integrity

Looking with Sadness on our Past

The release of the Holy See’s “McCarrick Report” in November 2020, found that the Diocese of Metuchen with each allegation of abuse by McCarrick, regardless of when or how long ago the abuse was alleged to have occurred, the diocese, as soon as the allegation became known, reported the matter to the appropriate Prosecutor’s office and the Attorney General. Subsequently, with the completion of the investigation by law enforcement, the Papal Nuncio was immediately informed of the accusation against McCarrick. The diocese hired an independent, third-party law firm to conduct an investigation and full review of its complete archives, the findings of which were published on the diocesan website and included in the McCarrick Report.

This sad history reminds us that we must be ever-vigilant and take every precaution so that history cannot repeat itself. The Diocese of Metuchen has not received a single credible complaint of abuse involving a minor in any of our schools or parishes by diocesan clergy since the adoption and implementation of the abuse prevention policies in 2002.

Moving Forward with Integrity

Recognizing that no amount of money will ever be able to fully compensate for or reconcile the suffering and wounds inflicted by abusive clergy, the Diocese of Metuchen announced the Independent Victim Compensation Program (IVCP) as one of the many means to offer survivors of abuse a tangible sign of the Church’s effort to facilitate healing. In June 2019, the IVCP was opened for submissions from those who, as children or young adults, were sexually abused by a priest or deacon of the diocese.

Endorsed by the five Roman Catholic dioceses in New Jersey, the IVCP was independently facilitated and managed by two program administrators employed by the Feinberg Law Firm in Washington, D.C. On part of the Diocese of Metuchen:

- 7 survivors** of abuse received settlements by program administrators
- \$1.27 million** paid in settlements through the IVCP
- \$2.9 million** paid in settlements since the founding of the diocese
- 100% of abuse reported to have occurred in the 1990’s or earlier, with 81% of abuse reported to have occurred in the 1980’s or earlier**

No donations made to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, Catholic Charities, to Catholic schools, nor money given by a donor for a specific ministry or apostolate, are used to fund the program.



While the IVCP closed for submissions in February 2020, the Diocese of Metuchen’s outreach to survivors of clergy sexual abuse continues. The reconciliation process and the healing that accompanies it are always present.

As a necessary step toward healing, equity and justice, the diocese continues to respond to any lawsuits with integrity and responsibility.

How to Report Abuse by a Bishop

In response to Pope Francis’ Motu proprio, Vos estis lux mundi, or “You are the light of the world,” the U.S. Bishops last year launched the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting service, which ensures all levels of Church hierarchy are held to the same level of accountability, so that McCarrick’s shameful actions cannot be repeated. A similar independent reporting structure had already been established by Bishop Checchio in the Diocese of Metuchen.

Complaints of sexual abuse and related misconduct by bishops can be submitted to the independent service by visiting ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling (800) 276-1562.

How to Report Abuse

If you suspect abuse by a member of clergy, an employee, or a volunteer for the Catholic Church, please: Immediately notify local law enforcement; Notify the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency by calling 1-877-NJ ABUSE (652-2873) or 1-800-835-5510 (TTY/TDD for the deaf), available 24/7; Contact the Diocese of Metuchen’s Director of Child and Youth Protection by calling (908) 930-4558 or visit diometuchen.org/healing to file a complaint.

More information about the measures in place to combat abuse in the diocese, can be found by visiting: **diometuchen.org/healing.**