



Archdiocese of Newark
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

+August 15, 2013
Solemnity of the Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary

My Dear Brother Priests in the Archdiocese of Newark:

This past week local media, once again, provided deceitful and misleading information about situations in the Diocese of Peoria and in this Archdiocese. I am duty-bound to denounce the impressions presented as false and harmful to many people. They can also be confusing to many others.

To the best of my knowledge, the particular case cited was brought to the attention of the officials in the Peoria Diocese in or about 2007, more than five years after I left that Diocese and arrived in New Jersey.

In the deposition given by me and selectively quoted by an interested attorney, some upset parents, and a former Priest of this Archdiocese, I spoke under oath and truthfully about matters relating to a certain Priest. I never vacationed with him, and I received no gifts other than those often given to a bishop by Pastors or Parishes. Since we were both coin collectors, I recall that he once gave me a coin of minimal value, of which he had several examples. At no time was I ever aware that some people thought him to be a threat to children or young people. Officials at the Diocese of Peoria who investigated an earlier case during my years there found that no allegation was sufficiently supported by evidence. In 2007, when Law Enforcement officials investigated the case cited in the lawsuit, the Diocese of Peoria provided all information concerning the earlier case. That investigation by the authorities determined that neither allegation had any basis for any criminal action. If the opposite had been the case, I would have acted to protect children and young people as I did on any other occasions in Illinois and here in New Jersey. Priests would have been taken out of Ministry as I have done in both locations. Children should never be at risk in so far as we can know.

In Peoria, as here, even before the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children, either I or other representatives of the Diocese met with those making allegations and often their families, and offered and provided counseling or other methods of support. One can understand when family difficulties lead parents, even by conjecture, to blame someone outside the family, but conjecture is no reason to undermine the Ministry of individual Priests (or Bishops, for that matter).

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One might ask why the representatives of the media do not explore the records of those who are raising false and misleading statements, perhaps for their own benefit, and the records and personal lifestyles of either disgruntled former, or marginalized and retired clergy of either the Archdiocese of Newark or the Diocese of Peoria. One might also ask what are the true motivations of all who have become a part of these 'traveling bandwagons' – including our local media representatives and politicians? What is their own historical and present relationship or animus against our Roman Catholic Faith and its Teachings, the Teachings of which I have always been a staunch and outspoken supporter, despite their 'unpopularity' in the secular and 'politically correct' society that has developed around us?

For those who are truly with us – the Church – in the protection of children, they have my respect, gratitude, and embrace. For any who set out to claim that I or the Church have had no effective part in the love and protection of children, is simply evil, wrong, immoral, and seemingly focused on their own self-aggrandizement. God only knows their personal reasons and agenda. We are still called to love them. And God will surely address them in due time.

Please feel free to share this with your parishioners, and all who are interested in the truth. I thank you sincerely for your continued leadership, Priestly Ministry, prayers, and support. Know that you can count on mine in return.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Myers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

✠Most Reverend John J. Myers
Archbishop of Newark

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