

February 12, 2013

BishopAccountability.org
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The Most Reverend José H. Gomez
Archbishop of Los Angeles
Archdiocese of Los Angeles
3424 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles CA 90010-2202

Your Excellency,

I have just discovered on your website a disturbing new list of accused priests entitled "Final Addendum to the Report to the People of God." Although dated October 2008, the document was created, according to the PDF properties of the file, on January 31, 2013, by a member of your staff, and posted on your website without announcement. The list's brief introduction states that it "includes names of clergy from a follow up review of Archdiocesan files, and names of clergy involved in Clergy I litigation which were not previously posted."

This list evidently has been in the archdiocese's possession for years. It raises questions for several reasons: 1) it names by our count two dozen priests who have not been previously identified to the public as accused; 2) it names at least two priests whose files you released on January 31 but whose names were completely redacted from those files because, you said, the allegations were unsubstantiated; and 3) it names priests who were not previously known to the public until you released their files on January 31.

I am writing to urge that you answer the many questions raised by this list and that you complete, update, and improve the lists that the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has posted on its website regarding the sexual abuse of children by priests and religious.

As you know, my organization maintains the definitive public list of U.S. Catholic bishops, priests, nuns, brothers, and seminarians accused of sexually abusing children, and we also maintain a list of U.S. bishops who have posted their own lists of accused clergy. In our experience, your Final Addendum is extremely unusual. In it, you broach the names of dozens of accused clergy for the first time. Most bishops' lists simply acknowledge names that have been made public by the survivors of abuse, by investigative reporters in the course of their work, or by prosecutors. So your list is welcome, but it is lacking in the detail that was provided in its two predecessor lists, which it references.

Cardinal Mahony's 2004 Report to the People of God provided information on the number of allegations made against each accused person and on the timeframe of the alleged abuse. His 2005 Addendum provided partial summaries of the accused persons' files, including information on assignments. It is essential that you provide the same information for the persons named in the new Final Addendum. This is important for the survivors of abuse by the priests and brothers whom you list and for the Catholics of Los Angeles, who have long been denied the forthrightness that the archdiocese owes them on these matters.

It is essential for everyone to know the nature of the allegations against these priests and brothers, because some of them may still pose a danger to children in Los Angeles, elsewhere in the United States, and in other countries. One of the priests listed in the Final Addendum is working as a therapist, and another is still in ministry. It is wrong that these names

have been kept secret so long, and it is imperative that they now be made public with adequate information for the public to assess the extent of the risk they pose.

It is also important to the priests and brothers on the list that their cases be accurately represented by their ordinary. Have some of them been acquitted in criminal proceedings? Has an accuser recanted the allegations against any of these men? Are some of them accused of sexual misconduct with an adult, not of sexual abuse of a minor? These important questions are not addressed by your Final Addendum.

The list as you quietly released it contains several names of priests whose files you also released on January 31, 2013. Those files illustrate the gravity of the situation, and the work that remains to be done. In addition to the Chandler and Ugarte files, you released at least two other files of priests on the Final Addendum list. In those files, you blacked out the names of priests "against whom charges were never substantiated." But those files contain no evidence that any investigation was done in order to substantiate the allegations. Rev. Joseph Puthenkandam (Priest Z-II) is said, in a memo to then-Monsignor Curry, to have "impregnated a young girl. REDACTED recollection is that she was about 15 or 16." The same memo states that Puthenkandam "went to [word blacked out] and raped someone." Clearly the archdiocese must supply the necessary details on the accused priests listed in the Final Addendum.

We commend you for posting again the 2004 Report to the People of God and the 2005 Addendum. As you know, those documents were originally posted by Cardinal Mahony, but had been absent from the archdiocesan website for some time. We urge you to post the three Errata Notices, which provide important corrections to the Report to the People of God.

The Clergy I process will soon be complete, after you release files that truly comply with the orders of Judge Tevrizian and Judge Elias. As I am sure you know, the files that you released on January 31, 2013, are not in compliance. But even then, the task of transparency will not be finished. Since October 2008, you have continued to receive allegations of sexual abuse committed by clergy already accused and by clergy who are being accused for the first time. This is a nationwide, indeed a global reality. In 2011 alone, the U.S. Catholic bishops and superiors of religious orders state that they received allegations against 167 priests never before accused.

Therefore it is clear that the "Final Addendum" is in no way a "final" reckoning of the tragedy of clergy sexual abuse in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The Report to the People of God and the Addenda, useful as they are, must be updated to include new allegations against the clergy listed in those documents. It is our hope that you will adopt the best aspects of lists released by your brother bishops, and follow a policy of full disclosure in future cases. In that way, the people of Los Angeles will have a full and ongoing account, from the person who is responsible for these cases and best informed about them.

Sincerely,



Terence McKiernan
President
BishopAccountability.org