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Dear Friends in the Lord,

Since the release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report in August, which detailed horrific cases of sexual abuse of minors by priests, the Church has been reeling. While the vast majority of these offenses occurred in the past, the People of God rightly demand and deserve transparency on the part of Church leadership. Such transparency is important to support victims in their healing and to rebuild trust in the Church.

In this spirit of transparency, the Jesuits West Province will release the names of those Jesuits with credible allegations of sexual abuse of minors since 1950. We are currently compiling the names of these Jesuits and plan to release them on the first Friday of Advent, December 7, 2018. Additionally, we will engage an external review of files to ensure that our list is complete and that we appropriately handled previous cases of abuse. If the review identifies additional names of Jesuits with credible allegations of abuse, we will release those names as well. We will announce the name of the firm that will conduct the external review on December 7.

On behalf of the Society of Jesus, I apologize to victims and their families. There is no greater betrayal of pastoral care than the abuse of a minor by someone with a sacred duty to protect and care for the People of God. While the Church in the U.S. has experienced significant reform in this area, we are now called to deepen that reform by becoming more transparent. In issuing this list and calling for an independent review, we hope to offer victims and their families a step forward in the healing process.

Since 2002, Jesuits have enforced stringent policies to ensure the safety of minors. Jesuits undergo ongoing professional development to help create safe environments for everyone. I encourage anyone who has felt victimized by a Jesuit to contact both Mary Pat Panighetti, Advocacy Coordinator for Jesuits West, at 408-893-8398 or mppanighetti@jesuits.org, and appropriate law enforcement and child-protective agencies.

I have had the privilege of speaking with abuse survivors. These conversations are moments of grace as I encounter people of courage and conviction, people who realize that although the Church has failed them, God never will.

I ask you to pray for the victims of abuse and for our Church. May we find in this moment the courage to move forward with integrity, transparency and accountability.

In Christ,

Fr. Scott Santarosa, SJ
Provincial