

Memorandum by Archbishop Viganò, approved as accurate by the same archbishop

STATEMENT FOR POPE BENEDICT XVI ABOUT THE PATTERN OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE
CRISIS IN THE UNITED STATES [25 May 2008]

Published on the web site RICHIARDSIPE.COM (sic) (Richard Sipe, former Benedictine monk, is a well-known psychiatrist, with numerous publications on the sexual abuse of the clergy) --- The following is noted regarding the document in question, transmitted on 24 April 2008 by Father [Joseph Augustine] Di Noia O.P., on behalf of the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to His Eminence the Cardinal Secretary of State and provided to the undersigned on 24 May:

- 1) The central thesis of Richard Sipe's Statement is as follows: "This sexual aberration is not generated from the bottom up, but from the top down, that is from the sexual behaviors of superiors, including bishops and cardinals".
- 2) As evidence of his thesis Sipe offers three examples: those of Bishop Thomas Lyons, former auxiliary of Washington, of Abbot John Eidenschink of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, both deceased, (it would seem that Richard Sipe was a monk in the same Abbey), and that of Card. Theodore E. McCarrick.
- 3) Richard Sipe's accusations against Card. McCarrick have been circulating for a long time but what makes the case particularly worrying now is the public report that has been made about him. Richard Sipe asserts that he has evidence of what he affirms and is willing to give it to the Holy Father. He writes: "While I was Adjunct Professor at a Pontifical Seminary, St. Mary's Baltimore (1972-1984) a number of seminarians came to me with concerns about the behavior of Theodore E. McCarrick then bishop of Metuchen New Jersey. It has been widely known for several decades that Bishop/Archbishop now Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick took seminarians and young priests to a shore home in New Jersey, sites in New York, and other places and slept with some of them. He established a coterie of young seminarians and priests that he encouraged to call him "Uncle Ted." I have his correspondence where he referred to these men as being "cousins" with each other. Catholic journalist Matt C. Abbott already featured the statements of two priests (2005) and one ex-priest (2006) about McCarrick. All three were "in the know" and aware of the Cardinal McCarrick's activities in the same mode as I had heard at the seminary. None of these reporters, as far as Abbott knew, had sexual contact with the cardinal in the infamous sleepovers, but one had first hand reports from a seminarian/priest who

did share a bed and received cards and letters from McCarrick. The modus operandi is similar to the documents and letters I have received from a priest who describes in detail McCarrick's sexual advances and personal activity. At least one prominent journalist at the Boston Globe was aware of McCarrick from his investigation of another priest, but until now legal documentation has not been available. And even at this point the complete story cannot be published because priest reporters are afraid of reprisals." Richard Sipe's Statement ends with the following appeal to the Holy Father: "I approach Your Holiness with due reverence, but with the same intensity that motivated Peter Damian to lay out before your predecessor, Pope Leo IX, a description of the condition of the clergy during his time. The problems he spoke of are similar and as great now in the United States as they were then in Rome. If Your Holiness requests I will submit to you personally documentation of that about which I have spoken."

4) The Personnel Office had already dealt with the Card. McCarrick case following a report by the Nuncio to the United States, in which Archbishop Sambini pointed out that by June 2006 the Memorandum of accusations against the Cardinal had already been forwarded "to about twenty people, between civil and ecclesiastical judicial authorities, police, and lawyers. It is therefore to be feared that the news will soon enter into the mix of public opinion." See attached memo of December 6, 2006. The writer concluded his memorandum with the following observations:

1. To the many scandals in the Church in the United States, it seems that another of particular gravity concerning a Cardinal is about to be added.
2. Because it regards a Cardinal, according to the Can. 1405 § 1, N. 2 °, "Ipsius Romani Pontificis dumtaxat ius est iudicandi." [It is solely the right of the Roman Pontiff himself to judge in the cases mentioned in canon 1401].
3. Si vera et probata sunt exposita [if what is asserted be true and proven], it would require an exemplary measure that might have a medicinal function that would soothe the serious scandal for the faithful, who nevertheless continue to love and believe in the Church. For once, it might be healthy if the ecclesiastical authorities were to intervene before the civil authorities and if possible before the scandal erupts in the press. This would restore a little dignity to a Church so tried and humiliated for so many abominable behaviors on the part of some pastors. In this case, the civil authority would no longer be required to judge an Eminent Cardinal, but a pastor in whose regard the Church had already taken the measures it deemed most opportune. S.m.i. [Salvo meliore iudicio]

5) The Internet publication of the Richard Sipe Statement took place around the 21-23 April, in the days immediately following the visit of the Holy Father in the U.S.A. In this context, the Statement poses a challenge to the words of the Holy Father in his speeches in the United States, after his repeated condemnation of sexual abuse by the clergy. (“No words of mine could describe the pain and the harm inflicted by such abuse”)

6) The case of Card. McCarrick, as has been said, is within the sole competence of the Roman Pontiff, who could, possibly, entrust the Promoter of Justice of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith with commencing an investigative process as soon as possible.