

U.S. Catholic bishops to pray over clergy sexual abuse scandal

By **JEFF KAROUB AND TERESA CRAWFORD**
Associated Press

MUNDELEIN, Ill. — U.S.-based Roman Catholic bishops gathered Wednesday for a weeklong retreat near Chicago on the church sexual abuse scandal that organizers say will focus on prayer and spiritual reflection and not formulating policy.

The retreat began a day after The Associated Press reported that the Vatican blocked U.S. bishops from taking measures last year to address the scandal because U.S. church leaders didn't discuss the legally problematic proposals with the Holy See enough beforehand.

The rebuke from Rome was contained in a letter from a Vatican official before the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops met in November. The move stunned abuse survivors and some other Catholics demanding actions.

The retreat also is a prelude to a summit of the world's bishops at the Vatican next month to forge a comprehensive response to the crisis that has lashed the church.

The meetings follow two blistering reports during 2018 from state attorneys general — in Illinois and Pennsylvania — alleging negligence by state church leaders.

Here's a look at the retreat.

What's on the agenda?
This is about prayer, not

policy-making, organizers say.

According to the Archdiocese of Chicago spokeswoman Anne Maselli, bishops gathering at the Mundelein Seminary will be praying, fasting and participating in spiritual lectures. And they will be alone: No staff members, other priests or members of the public or media are invited. Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a news release that they are convening "to pray on the intense matters before us."

The Catholic seminary at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, 40 miles north of Chicago, is the largest of its kind in the U.S. and home to roughly 200 seminarians from about 40 dioceses across the country and globe. According to its website, the lakefront campus blends "Colonial Revival and the architecture of Renaissance Rome, joining the Roman traditions of Catholicism with American cultural traditions."

Tied to the gate at the seminary's entrance were white ribbons with signs beneath them that read: "These ribbons represent prayers for our church." One ribbon bore the words: "Pope Francis & priests for mercy & healing"

A sign also advised that the campus was closed for a private retreat and that trespassing was prohibited.

Who are the main players?
Pope Francis has dis-



AP Photo/Teresa Crawford

A sign outside the Mundelein Seminary asks the faithful to pray for U.S.-based Roman Catholic bishops gathering there for a weeklong prayer retreat on Wednesday in Mundelein, Ill.

patched Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, the official papal preacher, to lead the retreat. And it's no accident that it's being held in Chicago, long considered a center of American Catholicism. The hosting Chicago archbishop, Cardinal Blase Cupich, was Francis' first major U.S. appointment and was picked by the pope to help organize the Vatican summit.

Cupich, who is considered a moderate, was the lead signatory on a recent letter to bishops around the world warning that a failure to deal with abuse now will jeopardize the church's mission globally. It also urged summit attendees to meet with clergy sexual abuse victims "to learn firsthand the suffering they have endured." Cupich issued a statement expressing regret for "our failures to address the scourge of clerical sexual

abuse," after Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's report in December alleging that the church had failed to disclose the names of at least 500 clergy members in the state accused of sexually abusing children.

A Pennsylvania grand jury report early last year alleged that hundreds of priests abused at least 1,000 children over seven decades in that state.

What can it really accomplish?

Potentially a good deal, according to Notre Dame researcher and teacher Timothy O'Malley. He says one of Francis' biggest concerns has been that the bishops experience a spiritual renewal — and "a spirit of penance" — along with regulations governing their behavior.

"When the bishops meet in public to discuss these procedures, there is a danger

that it's less an act of contrition and more an occasion for scoring political points," he said. "Part of the corruption is based in a certain clerical culture where bishops pursued self-interest, whether their own or their diocese's, at the expense of listening to lay victims. This retreat ... is a first step toward a renewal of the (church leadership) as a whole in the United States."

O'Malley added that it only works if they recognize that their office isn't about accruing power but becoming "a shepherd," or "someone who is willing to engage in self-sacrifice for the sake of the Church."

How do abuse victims feel about it?

Many are dismayed that it has taken so long for the church leadership to meet and act after so many years. Two advocacy groups, the Survivors Network of those

Abused by Priests (SNAP) and Ending Clergy Abuse, held a public demonstration Wednesday in Chicago.

SNAP says it wants Cardinal Cupich removed from his prominent role in planning the papal summit, and that Cardinal DiNardo should not lead the U.S. delegation to the Rome summit.

Zach Hiner, SNAP's executive director, said he's glad leaders are gathering "to find ways to address this crisis, but a week spent in silent prayer is not the response the public is looking for."

"If church officials truly want to do what is best, then they should be spending this week discussing how they can best comply with independent investigations by law enforcement, or how they can compel law enforcement officials in their state to act if no such investigation has begun yet," Hiner said in an email. "At this point, regardless of what bishops decide to do in the first week of January, we are placing our hopes for reform in the hands of secular, not church officials."

Hiner was joined at the demonstration by Peter Isely, a clergy abuse victim and founding member of both groups. He said most survivors want church leaders "to succeed at this."

"We want to be able to love the Catholic Church and love justice at the same time," Isely said. "If we have to make a decision we're going to love justice first until the Catholic Church joins us in our love for justice."

Commissioner Shafer sworn in



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Newly elected Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer takes the oath of office on Monday at the Umatilla County Courthouse in Pendleton.

Newly elected Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer took his oath of office Wednesday at the Umatilla County Courthouse, Pendleton. Shafer's mother, Kathryn Dale Shafer, a municipal judge and city manager

for the town of Nehalem, administered the oath. Dozens packed themselves into the large meeting room, including Shafer's family and many from the sheriff's office, where he worked until recently.

Shafer said the Bible he swore on came from his family.

"I asked my dad if I could use this," he told the crowd. "He said yes."

After the oath, Shafer took his seat on the board

with commissioners George Murdock and Bill Elfering. Shafer said he looks forward to serving the public, and Murdock adjourned the meeting and invited everyone to enjoy some pastries and refreshments.

Lodge: Elks Lodge buyer plans bar with Pendleton theme

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summer the group will contact former members and invite the public to a barbecue to see if there are people interested in being active Elks.

"We'll just take it from there," he said, and if enough people show interest, they can start hunting for a smaller and more affordable location.

Leonnig said bringing life to the old building will start in the spring and take several steps, and his focus is on the upstairs hall and the old stag bar. He said he had offers in Portland to own a bar, but he held off until the Elks building came along. He also said he is confident his contacts in Portland will want in on this Pendleton action.

"I've seen every freak-

ing mistake ever in the bar business ... and I'm going to steer us clear of all that in this project," Leonning said.

The new name could be as simple as The Lodge, he said, with a heavy Pendleton theme. He encouraged anyone with decor or relics that could pop as Pendleton eye candy to send an email to pendletonlodge@gmail.com.

Leonnig said the deal is so fresh he does not know when the old Elks lodge will open fully as the new business, and his contractor work is going to have to help finance the project. But he said this is coming at a good time with Pendleton's food and drink scene on the rise.

"It's going to be a hell of a place when we get done with it," he said.

'I'VE SEEN EVERY FREAKING MISTAKE EVER IN THE BAR BUSINESS ... AND I'M GOING TO STEER US CLEAR OF ALL THAT IN THIS PROJECT,' LEONNING SAID.

Cowboy: Pendleton man struck, killed by train on Tuesday

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2018, and in June an officer removed Murillo from the railroad tracks as a train approached and sounded its horn. Nelson said each instance involved "alcohol use to an excess."

The fatal collision

occurred Tuesday at about 1:40 a.m. near Southwest 11th Street and Frazer Avenue, Pendleton, according to Nelson, who headed up the investigation. He reported the engineer and conductor "placed the eastbound 136-car train into emergency stop mode upon seeing what

appeared to be a person laying between the rails."

The train's speed zone is 35 mph, Nelson said, and the train was traveling at 33 mph and operating normally. However, Murillo was wearing dark-colored clothing, the lighting was limited and the train could

not stop before striking Murillo.

"They got it stopped in 1,400 feet," he said. "Usually it takes a mile."

The crossing arms in the area also were working properly, according to Nelson, but Murillo was not in a designated crossing area.

Murillo drank that night at the Hamley Steakhouse. Nelson said trying to establish if someone over-served Murillo would be a "very tough thing to pinpoint on any specific entity due to the fact of distance and time from a serving location." Nelson said police

have nothing to indicate this was anything other than an unfortunate accident.

He also encouraged anyone with information about Murillo's death to call the Pendleton Police Department at 541-276-4411 or the Umatilla County Dispatch Center at 541-966-3651.

Baby: Technology connects father, mother and baby daughter

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"We didn't know the gender," Brandi said. "We wanted to find out together."

Ryan will get to hold his baby girl in March or April when he arrives home.

A few hours later, on the other side of the county, a Boardman couple welcomed the first baby of the year in Hermiston, born at Good Shepherd Medi-

cal Center. Preslee Hope Barnes was born to Audrey Guenther and Bobby Barnes at 1:47 p.m., and weighed seven pounds, five ounces.

Preslee is the first child for the couple, and was born 10 days late. Her parents said they went through about 20 different names before settling on the one they both loved.

"I heard the name on the

radio, there was a program where someone said that name," Barnes said. "I suggested it to Audrey, and she liked it right away."

The couple said they were hopeful that Preslee would arrive on her due date, but are now excited to have a New Year's baby.

"It's kind of rare to be able to say that," he said. "I'm liking it."

Both said they are look-

ing forward to everything about parenthood.

"I've wanted to be a parent as long as I can remember, and I've always known I was going to have a girl — same with Audrey," Barnes said.

The couple was also presented with a gift from Good Shepherd, a large basket which included clothes, blankets, books, and baby supplies.



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan

Audrey Guenther, left, holds her new baby girl, Preslee Hope Barnes. Preslee was the first baby of the year in Hermiston, born at Good Shepherd at 1:47 p.m. on Jan. 1.