



The National Association of Vocation  
& Formation Directors  
NAVFD

**PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“TOWARD LIGHT”  
STATEMENT ON SEXUAL ABUSE**

**NAVFD BOARD: October 2018**

As further revelations of sexual abuse of children and of persons in vulnerable positions, perpetrated by clergy, religious and others in positions of leadership in the Church are reported, the Board of the National Association of Vocation and Formation Directors (NAVFD) issues the following statement.

We stand with the victims of sexual abuse in their pain and in the profound suffering they continue to carry throughout their lives.

We recognize, identify with and share in the pain, anger and frustration of those who truly live the Gospel and who love the Church with integrity.

We accept the challenges, invitations and responsibilities that arise in light of the abuse as we continue to live out our mission of vocation and formation ministry in the Church.

We acknowledge that apologies, while expressed sincerely and with deep remorse, will never be adequate in this horrific context. Action now and in the future is absolutely necessary.

Therefore,

We hold perpetrators and those complicit in covering up abuse morally and legally accountable;

We cooperate fully and truthfully with those who are responsible for ensuring accountability and those who report it with integrity.

We commit to participating in a new culture of respect, care, integrity, accountability and transparency beginning with ourselves and within the wider Church and society.

We promise with truth and sincerity to stand with the victims of abuse, to support those desiring to live out their faith and their particular vocation fully and with integrity.

We participate in and will continue to support and assist in the development of best practices for the assessment and screening of candidates to religious life and to holy orders and for positions of lay leadership in the Church.

We commit to education, training and formation (in partnership with others as necessary) for vocation and formation ministers and leaders as we continue our work and in the evolving development of our mission

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and ministry.

We will support our colleagues who are responsible to ensure that only mature, healthy and integrated adults are admitted to seminaries, religious communities and leadership programmes.

We will continue to provide and to develop opportunities for those working in religious formation to develop their role in walking with others as they mature humanly, sexually, healthily and spiritually in their respective vocations.

Above all, we will be women and men of prayer and action for the healing of victims of abuse, for personal integrity and for the healing of Church within society as we move forward in the hope that marks human existence and Christianity. We will, at all times endeavour to be all that we are called to be: "Salt of the Earth and Light of the World" (Matthew 5: 13-16).