

Editor's Note: *Catholic Family News* is grateful to the Archbishop for permitting us to publish the text of his interview with EWTN's Raymond Arroyo. It is another illuminating discussion of the McCarrick Report. Stay tuned as we are working on a special video report on the St. Gallen Mafia mentioned in this interview.

INTERVIEW BY RAYMOND ARROYO, EWTN
TO ARCHBISHOP CARLO MARIA VIGANÒ

November 12, 2020

Your Excellency, the report claims you “did not come forward” to present evidence for this Vatican inquiry: were you asked to provide information? Did anyone reach out to you?

I am surprised to discover that a Report in which I am mentioned 306 times accuses me of not having presented myself to testify in this Vatican inquiry on Theodore McCarrick. But according to the norm of canon law, the calling of witnesses is the responsibility of the one who is in charge of the process, on the basis of evidence gathered in the investigation phase.

My first intervention about McCarrick, which I made as Delegate for the Pontifical Representations in the Secretariat of State, goes back to December 6, 2006, following a report of the then-Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. Subsequently, in 2008, I presented a second Memorandum that reported facts of such gravity and in such detail that it led me to recommend that McCarrick be deposed as Cardinal and that he be reduced to the lay state. My Testimony of August 2018 is known to everyone, as well as my subsequent [declarations](#).

It is completely incomprehensible and anomalous that it was not considered opportune to call upon me to testify, but even more disturbing that this deliberate omission was then used against me. And let it not be said to me that I had made myself untraceable: the Secretariat of State has my personal email address, which is still active.

On the other hand, just as I was not consulted for the drafting of the McCarrick Report, so also in 2012, the three cardinals whom Benedict XVI placed in charge of the investigation of Vatileaks 1, did not call upon me to give testimony, even though I was also personally involved. Only after my explicit request did Cardinal Julian Herranz, the head of the Commission, permit me to give a deposition, with these words: “If you really want to...!”

Furthermore, it also seems significant to me that James Grein, the only victim of McCarrick's sexual molestations who had the courage to denounce him publicly, does not appear in the Report, and that there is no trace of his testimony, in which he would have also reported the trip he made with McCarrick to St. Gallen at the end of the 1950s.

From the public statements of James Grein, it is clear that the beginning of McCarrick's climb - he was then a young, newly ordained priest - coincided with that visit to Switzerland, to a monastery that was later the site of the meetings of the conspirators of the so-called "St. Gallen mafia." According to the declarations of the deceased Cardinal Godfried Danneels, that group of prelates decided to support the election of Bergoglio both after the death of John Paul II as well as during the conclave that followed the controversial resignation of Benedict XVI.

I recall that during a conference at Villanova University on October 11, 2013, then-Cardinal McCarrick admitted to having supported the election of Cardinal Bergoglio at the beginning of the General Congregations prior to the conclave that had been held a few months earlier [in March 2013].

I wonder what sort of reliability a judicial body can have that has such an obvious conflict of interest due to its past relationship with the accused. How can Bergoglio and the Secretariat of State that depends on him pretend to appear impartial when McCarrick went to the Vatican with an abnormal frequency; when in June 2013 he was tasked [by Bergoglio] with making a diplomatic trip to China? And how can one not think that their repeated attempts at cover-up and denial of their responsibilities are the cause of the systematic effort to discredit me as a witness, in order not to bring to light the complicity and connivances that exist between them and McCarrick himself?

The Pope, according to the report, maintains that you did not inform him of McCarrick's activities or restrictions in June of 2013. Your response?

This statement is absolutely false. First of all, it was Bergoglio himself, on June 23, 2013, who explicitly asked me my opinion of McCarrick. As I testified in my 2018 Memoir:

I answered him with complete frankness [...]: *"Holy Father, I don't know if you know Cardinal McCarrick, but if you ask the Congregation for Bishops there is a dossier this thick about him. He corrupted generations of seminarians and priests and Pope Benedict ordered him to withdraw to a life of prayer and penance."* The Pope did not make the slightest comment about those very grave words of mine and did not show any expression of surprise on his face, as if he had already known the matter for some time, and he immediately changed the subject. But then, what was the Pope's purpose in asking me that

question: “What is Cardinal McCarrick like?” He clearly wanted to find out if I was an ally of McCarrick or not.

It should be noted that I had learned from McCarrick himself that Bergoglio had received him four days before my audience, and that Bergoglio had authorized him to go to China. What was the point of asking me for an opinion, when Bergoglio already held McCarrick in the highest esteem?

McCarrick meanwhile came quietly to Rome, received assignments from the Vatican, including official ones, and carried on with his activities as if nothing had happened. In May 2014, I learned from the *Washington Times* of a trip made by McCarrick to the Central African Republic on behalf of the Department of State (the Secretary of State was then John Kerry): this trip is also mentioned in the Report. We are talking about 2014. And yet beginning in 2008, Benedict XVI had ordered the American Cardinal to retire to a private life, not to celebrate or attend public events, and not to make trips.

For this reason, given the way that McCarrick was being treated, I asked Cardinal Parolin if the sanctions against McCarrick were still to be considered valid. But I received no response.

At that point, having reported to the Pope in person, and having received no answer from the Secretary of State, what could I still do? To whom could I appeal?

From the Report, I learn that McCarricks’ continuous assignments and travels abroad were considered by Archbishop Wuerl and even by Nuncio Sambini (deceased in 2011) as a “sufficient form of removal” (cf. footnote 1013 of the Report). And I remain sincerely shocked to learn from the Report that:

...the indications were not “sanctions”; they were not imposed by Pope Benedict XVI; McCarrick was never forbidden to celebrate Mass in public; McCarrick was not prohibited from giving lectures; Cardinal Re did not impose on McCarrick “the obligation” of dedicating himself to a life of prayer and penance; and McCarrick remained free to conduct activities, including travel, with the permission of the Holy See, including the Nuncio (cf. footnote 1006, ibidem).

If this is so, it means that despite the Cardinal’s reprehensible conduct, the Holy See did not consider it appropriate to take disciplinary measures against McCarrick, which confirms my denunciation of the corruption of the Curia.

The report goes to great pains to attempt to paint you as somehow lax in

investigating the claims of Priest 3. (They brush by the fact that it was you who brought these concerns to the Holy See in the first place). Did you avoid placing yourself “in a position to ascertain the credibility of Priest 3”?

It is obvious what my role was in bringing McCarrick’s scandals to light, and that I have always taken steps to report any information that came into my possession to the Holy See. I recall that we are talking about 2012, when I had just been appointed Nuncio to the United States.

In the Report I am accused of not having followed up on the request for information regarding the accusations made by “Priest 3” against McCarrick. This is absolutely false! It is the writers of the Report themselves who provide the evidence of the deception they have concocted in order to strike me and discredit me. In fact, in another place in the Report it says that on June 13, 2013, I wrote to Cardinal Ouellet, sending him both the letter that Bishop Bootkoski had written to me, as well as the letter sent to “Priest 3.” I informed him that the civil case of “Priest 3” had been dismissed without the possibility of appeal. Bishop Bootkoski characterized the accusations of “Priest 3” as false and slanderous.

I would like to emphasize one aspect in particular. Those who accuse me of not having sent a written communication to Bishop Bootkoski, the Ordinary of “Priest 3” and Bishop of Metuchen, know very well that this depends on the precise directions of the Secretariat of State. And they know equally well - as the Report confirms - that there was a telephone communication between Bishop Bootkoski and me, about which I in turn informed Cardinal Ouellet.

It should not be forgotten that in those years there were lawyers who were not content to bring Dioceses to judgment for crimes committed by priests, but who wanted to demonstrate that the Holy See itself - like the headquarters of a multinational company - held the ultimate responsibility for giving compensation to victims of molestation. Lawyer Jeffrey Lena knows something about this, who succeeded in two separate trials in preventing responsibility for the cover-up of abuse from falling on Pope Benedict XVI.

And what are your thoughts on the Report placing the lion share of the blame for McCarrick’s rise and place in the Church at the feet of John Paul II and Benedict XVI?

The intentions of the one who drafted the Report are clear: to pass off responsibility for the promotions of McCarrick to his Predecessors, one of whom is deceased and canonized (John Paul II), the other who is old and weak (Benedict XVI). The former cannot defend himself from the grave, while the latter is too meek to blatantly disavow his successor by calling him

a liar and discrediting him, as well as the function he holds. The disturbing thing is that within the Report itself - obviously put together by many hands - there are numerous contradictions, enough to make the arguments set forth have little credibility.

I wonder then: who convinced John Paul II and Benedict XVI not to take into account the serious accusations against McCarrick? Who had an interest in getting McCarrick promoted, so that he could gain an advantage in terms of power and money?

Someone probably made John Paul II believe that the accusations against McCarrick were fabricated, following the model of the discrediting operations that communist Poland had already carried out against good bishops and priests who opposed the regime.

In the case of John Paul II, the main party interested in the promotion of McCarrick was definitely Cardinal Sodano. He was Secretary of State until September 2006: all information came to him. In November 2000 Nuncio Montalvo sent him his report and the accusations of grave abuse committed by McCarrick.

Let's not forget that in this period the scandal of Father Maciel broke out, which Sodano sought to cover up by falsifying a statement of Benedict XVI, in which it was said that the Pope considered the case closed. Benedict XVI called a plenary session of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Cardinal Arinze succeeded in having Maciel condemned, despite the opposition of the Secretary of State.

The name of Cardinal Sodano also appeared in connection to a scandalous real estate speculation. In 2003, the Cardinal's nephew, the engineer Andrea Sodano, with letters of recommendation from his uncle the Secretary of State and in his capacity as a consultant to the Follieri real estate group (in some official documents he is also indicated as vice-president of the group), acquired property at rock bottom prices from American dioceses condemned to compensate damages from civil sexual abuse cases, obtaining an enormous economic advantage for himself to the detriment of the Church. Raffaello Follieri, the owner of the group, was convicted of fraud and money laundering, precisely because of reckless transactions in the sale of these properties. Needless to say, Follieri had a close relationship with the *Clinton Global Initiative* and with the Clinton family, as well as the Democratic party: "The former President and Senator Hillary are our friends," [Follieri boasted](#).

The same connections, the same complicities, the same acquaintances always recur: McCarrick, Clinton, [Biden](#), the Democrats, and the Modernists, along with a procession of homosexuals and molesters that is not irrelevant.

With regard to Benedict XVI, the ones who had daily, direct access to the Pope were the

Secretary of State Bertone and the Substitute Sandri, who were able to control and filter information about McCarrick and exert pressure on the Holy Father.

Once again, the Report speaks for itself. The one who presented the question directly to Pope Benedict XVI was Cardinal Bertone, who, contrary to what I had repeatedly proposed – namely, that the very grave and detailed accusations against McCarrick required an exemplary canonical process leading to his removal from the College of Cardinals and his reduction to the lay state – led Pope Benedict to decide that no canonical process should be undertaken nor should any canonical sanctions be prescribed, but that instead “*a simple appeal to McCarrick’s conscience and ecclesial spirit*” would be made.

And here yet another flagrant contradiction appears evident: how is it possible to reconcile a *simple appeal to conscience* with the formal instructions that were given both to Nuncio Sambini and to me, according to which McCarrick could not reside in the seminary where he was living, could not participate in public activities, could not travel, and had to lead a retired life of prayer and penance?

The corruption of the highest levels of the Vatican is so evident that it leads one to consider the Report as an unworthy attempt to make Bergoglio appear absolutely alien to the manipulations of the Curia, indeed as a sort of implacable persecutor of the corrupt, while the evidence of the facts demonstrates the opposite. I would say that Bergoglio is to the deep church as Biden is to the deep state...

I would like to also note that the fact of blaming John Paul II for the appointment of McCarrick despite the negative opinion of the Congregation of Bishops and its Prefect Cardinal Re could be applied also to Jorge Mario Bergoglio himself, about whom the Superior General of the Jesuits expressed strong reservations. If Wojtyła made a mistake with McCarrick and for this reason is considered implicitly responsible for the scandals that occurred, what prevents this judgment from also being extended to the promotion of Bergoglio as Archbishop of Buenos Aires and then as Cardinal? Let’s remember that in the Consistory of 2001, in addition to McCarrick and Bergoglio, other leading members of the Saint Gallen Mafia received the red hat...

Is there anything else we should cover?

In conclusion I would like to quote [a recent article by Riccardo Cascioli](#), adopting his lucid judgment as my own:

Although the figure of a McCarrick who was a serial predator emerges from the Report, no great reaction was triggered until 2017, when the first report of the abuse of a minor

arrived. [...] In practice we are told that “immoral behavior with adults,” while certainly not a good thing, is however in the end something that is tolerated. The real alarm, the one that provides for penalties, even heavy ones, is sounded only if the one abused is a minor. As if the dozens and dozens of future priests who shared a bed with McCarrick, and who were thus for the most part condemned to an unbalanced priestly life, didn’t really count for much. As if the moral devastation and the destruction of faith caused by a bishop-predator - lost vocations, priests who in turn repeated the abuse, episcopal appointments distorted by pathological ties - were all only a minor problem.

[...] It was deliberately ignored that what permitted McCarrick’s irresistible rise is a system of power also known as the gay lobby, which favors the appointment and career of bishops with certain characteristics. [...]

No, there really is no sign at all that the Church has learned anything from the McCarrick affair; there is rather the sense that one person was made to pay so that others could quietly continue. And in the meantime advancing the idea that if a priest has homosexual tendencies, it’s no problem.

In this grotesque farce, now cloaked in a false semblance of legalism, there is no hesitation to drag the entire Church through the mud - its prestige before the world, its authority over the faithful - in order to save the now-compromised image of corrupt, unworthy, depraved prelates. I limit myself to observing that even now, in the Vatican, Bergoglio still surrounds himself with notorious homosexuals and people with gravely compromised reputations. This is the most blatant disavowal of Bergoglio’s supposed moralizing work.