

Advisory

To: News Directors, Assignment Editors and other Interested Persons

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From Rome, Detroit's archbishop, Adam Cardinal Maida, spoke out on a wide range of questions and issues following the special meeting of American cardinal archbishops with Vatican officials on clerical sexual misconduct. The following are excerpts of a live interview the cardinal gave Thursday morning, April 25, on WJR Radio:

Purpose of Meeting

“We know what we want to do, and that is we want to preserve the integrity of our relationship with our young people. We've got to protect our families and regain some of the trust and credibility that we've lost.”

Abusive Priests

“If one priest would abuse a child after all of this, I would put him out right away. I mean, we've given everybody ample notice and we see the great strain that's been on—especially victims' families and all of us. It's a horrible thing, and in most cases it's a crime. And it's a horrible sin...”

Sexual Orientation of Abusers

“All these things are very sinful, and nobody should be doing them, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or whoever you are. And so, we need to—it's hard to put everything into categories and to blame one group of people or another group of people. Any sexual activity with a teenager by a heterosexual or homosexual is wrong. It's sinful and it's a crime in Michigan, and detestable.”

Detroit's Policy

“In Detroit, we've had a policy since 1988. It's been revised on two occasions and now we're going through another revision in which we would hope to strengthen and do it in such a way that we'll root out all the abusers in the priesthood. What has happened 30, 40 years ago is difficult for me to correct. But what happens in the future is pretty much my charge.”

Upcoming meeting of All American Bishops

“When we meet in Dallas in June, all the bishops in the United States, we'll have a great discussion about this. And then when I come home from that meeting, I'll have an even bigger discussion with my priests and my people and we will put into effect a policy—even before Dallas, perhaps—I hope so—at least a draft of a policy, and we're going to attack this thing very vigorously and forthrightly.”

Cardinal Maida remains in Rome for previously scheduled meetings at the Vatican.