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## Contents

Editorial: From Crisis to Credibility .....	3
Be United in the Unconditional Love of God .....	5
<i>Bhausahab Sansare SJ</i>	
An Opportunity to Reform the Church .....	9
<i>Felix Wilfred</i>	
Making it an Opportunity .....	22
<i>Konrad Noronha SJ</i>	
From Eros to Love through Prayer and Asceticism .....	25
<i>Paul Thelakkat</i>	
Called to be Lamb of God .....	29
<i>Joy Ainiyadan</i>	
Walking After the Lord More Faithfully .....	33
<i>Joe Mattam SJ</i>	
Fr Kurien Kunnumpuram: Thinker and Formator .....	35
<i>Rt Rev Thomas Dabre</i>	
Fr Kurien Kunnumpuram: Joy and Freedom .....	37
<i>Kuruvilla Pandikattu</i>	



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## Editorial

### From Crisis to Credibility

The famous Irish singer Sinéad O'Connor has announced on October 19, 2018 that "I am proud to have become a Muslim." She described herself as very very happy in doing so. "I'm an ugly old hag," she wrote. "But I'm a very, very, very happy old hag." One of the reasons cited by her for the conversion is the sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

Another related news. It is reported that the Department of US Justice has subpoenaed at least seven of the eight Catholic dioceses in Pennsylvania as part of an investigation into abuse by priests. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and the dioceses of Allentown, Erie, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh and Scranton acknowledged on Thursday they had received federal subpoenas.

"The Diocese of Pittsburgh has received the subpoena from the US Department of Justice and will cooperate fully with any and all investigations of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy in Pennsylvania," said spokesman the Rev. Nicholas S. Vaskov.

Further, Pope Francis has called on Catholic bishops nationwide to gather for a historic seven-day spiritual retreat at Mundelein Seminary in suburban Chicago in January 2018 as church hierarchy grapples with the ongoing clergy sex abuse scandal.

As chancellor of the seminary, Cardinal Blase Cupich – an Omaha native and leader of the Chicago archdiocese – will serve as host of the gathering, which could include some 300 bishops from around the country.

Miguel Diaz, Professor of Theology, Loyola University, Chicago, called the retreat "historically significant for American Catholics."

The concept of the gathering reflects the pope's leadership style – his Jesuit background in particular – to address church challenges “within the context of collaborative and prayerful discernment,” said Diaz, a former U.S. ambassador to the Vatican.

Larry Antonsen, a Chicago leader of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, was skeptical that a weeklong spiritual retreat will prompt any real change. He called on church hierarchy to be more transparent. “They need to be more open and not do everything in secret,” he said. “The retreat would not be open to the public, I’m sure. They need to get laypeople involved, because they have not done a very good job of handling this in-house.”

Diaz said: “Make no mistake: Pope Francis knows that the sexual abuse scandal presents a serious crisis to the authority of U.S. bishops. He has invited them to ‘retreat’ so they can figure out what needs to be done to credibly address human suffering related to gender and sex-based forms of sexual abuse.”

Unfortunately, in India also there has been reports of grave sexual abuse cases. So this issue of our journal is devoted to making this serious crisis into an opportunity.

One sad news is the demise of Fr. Kurien Kunnumpuram, SJ, 87, the former editor of Asian Journal for Religious Studies, on October 23, 2018, after 29 days in coma. We pray for and with him.

The 125 Years of Papal Seminary's existence is a reason to celebrate on Nov 6-8, 2018. Detailed report will be published in the next issue of this journal. All these interviews were done in collaboration with SmartCompanion, India, published from Kochi, Kerala.

The AJRS team wishes each one of the readers a Merry Christmas and New Year.

The Editor