

October 26, 2024

Via email only at: archbishopsoffice@archstl.org

His Excellency Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski
Archdiocese of St. Louis
20 Archbishop May Road
St. Louis, MO 63139

RE: Upcoming USCCB meeting in Baltimore & the CCHD
(as well as fundraising trust & transparency in general)

Dear Excellency Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski:

I am writing to you about the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). As you are aware, the CCHD has been at the center of a shake-up that began this past April when Ralph McCloud stepped down as its long-time executive director. There have been reports of financial mismanagement, suggestions that CCHD funds be reoriented toward Catholic education, and even rumors that the CCHD may be closed altogether. The uncertainty of what is happening with the CCHD is a matter of great concern to me, as it should be for all Catholics. As I understand it, more than 20 U.S. Bishops have publicly called for a re-examination of the CCHD. I am prayerfully hoping that you can clarify the following for myself and all STL Catholics:

- The last published grants list for the CCHD is 2021-2022. We do not have any way of tracking how CCHD funds have been used over the last two years, and we have no idea how CCHD funds are being used currently. Before I can even consider a donation to the CCHD, I will need to see a full accounting of how CCHD funds have been used over the last two years and how they are being used now.
- The national CCHD collection is still scheduled to take place on November 23rd & 24th, but there are many questions swirling around about how those funds will be used. In good conscience, I cannot give to the CCHD unless and until I know precisely how those funds will be used. And what will happen to those funds if the CCHD is closed down altogether?

Your Excellency, as a faithful Catholic, I understand the obligation to be a good steward of the funds Our Blessed Lord has made available. If the CCHD is going to solicit funds from Catholics, it must be made known to the CCHD that they have an obligation to provide full transparency regarding the use of those funds, past and present. I prayerfully request that you put in writing your position regarding the CCHD, and specifically address your position as to whether the USCCB and the CCHD should

provide full transparency immediately. Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration of this important request. As you know, I have unfortunately been on the front lines of the abuse crisis within Holy Mother Church for more than the last 30 years. A lack of transparency (especially on the part of Bishops & Vicars) has been a tragic hallmark of that abuse crisis, which extends well beyond just sexual abuse, as horrific as that surely is. I understand that your own Priest Personnel Board recently discussed the serious consequences of such a lack of trust, and its morale on our good & holy priests, your spiritual sons (for whom I pray daily!).

Given all of this, surely you and your leadership “cabinet” see it as imperative to be “on the record” and transparent, when it comes to any critical issue, including fundraising in general, and the CCHD in particular. IF you truly wish to rebuild trust with the “average catholic” still sitting in the pews, you will have to be “on the record” (in writing or video, or BOTH), on such critical issues. Thus, I have also copied a number of local STL Catholic leaders who are regularly involved in fundraising efforts here in the Rome of the West. I would certainly welcome their “on the record” written response to this correspondence. I sincerely and prayerfully hope that they are willing to tell you that we are “Show-Me State” Catholics, and that we do rightfully expect our leaders to “show us,” and not simply to “tell” us something with lip-service, that is clearly the opposite of one’s “actions.” The absence of any such transparency will only further erode trust among the faithful flock, and further deteriorate the Archdiocese of St. Louis. I respectfully request the favor of a written reply to this correspondence.

Please know that my family and I pray for you and our Archdiocesan leadership all the time, especially in our daily Rosary. We urgently pray for mercy for all those who scatter Christ’s flock.

Your true brother in Christ,

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Ken R. Battis

Cc: Communications@archstl.org (requesting that this be mentioned or added to the next “cabinet” meeting or “Priest Personnel Board” meeting)
CarlScheble@archstl.org (Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia)
ChrisMartin@archstl.org (Vicar for Parish Mission & Vitality)
KennethBrown@archstl.org (Vicar for Clergy)
CoryNardoni@archstl.org (Chief Financial Officer?, although no longer listed on the website?)
MarieKenyon@archstl.org (AD-STL appointed leader for CCHD)
MichealLydon@archstl.org (Vicar, and believed to be “supervisor” for CCHD)
BrianNiebrugge@archstl.org (Executive Director of the Annual Catholic Appeal)
Joe.Bestgen@rcfstl.org (President & CEO of the Roman Catholic Foundation)