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Bishop Tobin weighs in on the divide in hierarchy of the Catholic Church

The current firestorm in the Catholic Church sparked by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò's letter containing accusations against our Holy Father, Pope Francis has caused several members of our diocesan family to ask for my reaction on the matter, which has prompted these thoughts.

First, I need to emphasize that I do not have any privileged information about this matter, nor do I have the facts necessary to come to a definitive, impartial judgement. Nonetheless, the allegations lodged by Archbishop Viganò involving Pope Francis are substantive, and need to be investigated in a prompt and just manner.

The present impasse in the Church, unfolding on an international level, has caused confusion and division among the faithful, even locally. Only Pope Francis can resolve the serious crisis in which the Church now finds herself, and I respectfully urge His Holiness to address this matter as soon as possible. The future direction of the Church, its spiritual welfare, and the faith of God's people, are at stake.

In the meantime, I remind myself and the faithful of the Diocese of Providence that Pope Francis is the duly elected Bishop of Rome. He is the Vicar of Christ, our Supreme Pastor, and our spiritual father. Regardless of our perception of current events, the Holy Father needs and deserves our respect, our prayers and our affection, now as much as ever. Members of a family do not abandon their father, even in difficult times.
