



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Feast of St. Blaise
Feb. 3, 2023

Prot. N. 2023-0075 AB A

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Some of you may know that for several months in 2022 the Archdiocese was engaged in a review of the operations and structure of The Avodah Collective, a ministry that seeks to help victims of sex-trafficking. That review concluded with a letter issued on August 23, 2022, by the Vicar General, Father Randy Dollins, who stated that the result of the review was that Avodah could no longer call itself a Catholic ministry.

Following that letter, the leadership of Avodah reached out to staff at the Archdiocese to see if that decision could be amended. Discussions were held about changes that needed to be made to guard against conflicts of interest that could exist in the structure of Avodah and measures that could be taken to provide greater transparency. These changes were said to be implemented in November 2022.

Dialogue continued in a positive direction until the end of January 2023, when my staff began receiving complaints from the various groups of religious sisters that Avodah has trained and oversees in several cities. After inquiries by my staff, we learned that these complaints are not isolated but systemic. Moreover, when confronted with these issues, my staff was met with deception and excuses. As a result of similar problems, two prominent Catholic ministries dedicated to helping sex-trafficking victims have also cut ties with Avodah.

It saddens me to inform you of this, since the need for faith-filled ministries that help sex-trafficking victims is great. Going forward, I have decided that the Catholic status of Avodah will not be restored and that further discussions will not be entertained.

I am making this news public so as to prevent the spread of rumors and to ensure that it is known that the sisters who work with Avodah are without blame in this situation.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samuel J. Aquila".

Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L.
Archbishop of Denver