



DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

November 27, 2018

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

In my letter of September 7, 2018, I announced the urgent need for administrative action with regards to the current crisis in the Church. Several initiatives have already begun and additional initiatives are planned. I am pleased to take this opportunity to report on these efforts.

On September 15, the Diocese came together at St Augustine Cathedral for a **Mass of Reparation**. It was a humbling and healing moment for the many who participated. Many parishes have had their own Masses of reparation as well. On October 31, the Diocese published its **Financial Accountability Report**, a copy of which is available on the "A Pledge to Protect" page of our Diocesan website. In all of these efforts to address the crisis with the utmost transparency and accountability, we have been truly blessed by the support we have felt from the faithful of our Diocese who have made their voices heard and also offered their prayers.

In addition, we have begun our engagement with retired Judge Robert Holzberg, who is leading the team that will produce the **Diocesan Accountability Report**. Judge Holzberg and his team have begun this work in earnest and expect to complete the effort by Spring of 2019. As I indicated in my earlier letter, this work will examine information regarding the sexual abuse of minors contained in the Diocesan files and the Diocesan response to this abuse over the years. The Judge's investigation will result in a comprehensive and transparent accounting of sexual abuse of minors by Diocesan clergy between 1953 and today, and the Diocesan response to such abuse. I further indicated in my letter that the methodology for this work would be posted on the diocesan website.

I write to you today to share this methodology. Judge Holzberg has indicated that, as a part of his investigatory process, his team has been:

- (1) conducting interviews of current and former Diocese religious and lay personnel;
- (2) reviewing and analyzing hundreds of thousands of documents, including confidential and canonical files; and
- (3) reviewing litigation records.

In addition, the team is planning to speak to some victims and survivors of or witnesses to abuse. Given the broad scope of this assignment, Judge Holzberg's team is approaching the investigation systematically. As a critical part of this process, they have also begun

consulting with outside experts familiar with canon law, child sexual abuse and investigations of religious institutions.

With the methodology articulated above, it is expected that the information collected will then be analyzed and consolidated into findings that may lead to follow up work by the team. Again, as earlier reported, this work will ultimately lead to a report of the findings for the benefit of the faithful of the Diocese, including constructive recommendations for Diocesan policy and procedure as it relates to sexual abuse of minors by clergy and the Diocesan accountability in its response to this issue.

I welcome the professional and thorough work that Judge Holzberg's team has begun and look forward to the full cooperation of all those who will contribute in some way to the unprecedented work that this effort will entail. I truly believe that the report will be a moment of both transparency and grace for the Diocese of Bridgeport. While we are limited as to what changes we can effect for the larger Church, my hope as your Bishop is that these measures will begin to heal the wounds that we feel, address the legitimate desire for real change and restore your confidence in every level of leadership so that we can fully live out our faith with dignity, honesty and love for the Lord.

With an assurance of prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport