



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

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August 16, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing to you today with a very, very heavy heart regarding the recent public accusations about Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, and the release of the grand jury report from the State of Pennsylvania. These reports sicken me and leave me with a deep sense of anger and shame for what has been inflicted on the People of God in the past by certain shepherds of the flock, both the direct offenders against children and the purported cover up engaged in by some bishops.

After years of efforts to right this situation and to help people to heal their pain caused by wolves in sheep's clothing, I cannot possibly imagine the sense of betrayal you may feel in the wake of these revelations. You have a right to expect more from the entire Church and especially from Her bishops.

Through the years I have listened carefully to many victims and walked with them as they courageously engage in the healing process. These people are truly heroic despite having their innocence robbed from them as young children. Just as Jesus who wept over Jerusalem, I continue to weep for the Church and for all affected by this scandal.

The Independent Review Board of the Diocese of Green Bay, comprised mostly of professional laypeople, has been charged with the review and the oversight process relating to people who come forward with any complaint of possible sexual abuse of a minor. Along with this independent board, I would like to reaffirm my full-hearted commitment to ensuring that all people will be safe within our Church.

As bishops, we believe that there will be decisive actions regarding significant accountability and reform that must be taken in light of recent events and reports. As the details of these actions emerge, for my part I am personally committed to prayer and atonement to assist in the necessary reform of the Church. As the bishop for the Diocese of Green Bay, my first duty is the care of the souls in Christ's Church. As part of this duty, I recognize that I am fully accountable for what I do or fail to do in protecting our parishioners. I am also engaging in personal reflection and prayer for guidance to do whatever is needed to remove barriers that keep us from focusing on Jesus who is the Good Shepherd, who heals our wounds and welcomes all into the Kingdom of God.

I express my gratitude to the priests and pastoral leaders who day after day reach out providing pastoral care for all of you, and to all of you who so often pray for and express your appreciation for them.

May God bless you and your families, as I remain

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend David L. Ricken, DD, JCL
Bishop of Green Bay