



Diocese of Springfield

Office of the Bishop

January 15, 2019

Dear friends in Christ,

In recent months our church has once again found itself confronting the crisis of child sexual abuse, specifically the past failures of the church to respond to this terrible evil within our midst.

While neither the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report nor the Archbishop McCarrick allegations had any direct relationship to our diocese, these and other reported failures have understandably been the cause of renewed concerns within our Catholic community. This also has given way to questions regarding how we as a diocese have responded to allegations and reached out to victims of abuse, both in the past as well as through our ongoing efforts.

There is a collective sense that we need to do more.

With that in mind, over the next few months we will commit ourselves to prayer and dialogue. Our effort will be fourfold.

First, starting February 4, we will offer four regional “Listening and Dialogue” sessions in which people will have a chance to share concerns and questions with me and representatives from the diocese. These sessions will be moderated and interactive; we will try to provide answers to as many questions as possible.

On the first Monday of Lent, March 11, I am asking that all churches remain open throughout the day for a “Day of Prayer for Healing and Reconciliation.” Special prayer cards will be available for those who are willing to take a few minutes to visit a church and offer their own private prayer. I also have asked parishes to consider offering a Rosary prayer service or Eucharistic Adoration on this same day, and have requested that those churches with bells toll them throughout the day as an outward call to prayer.

In mid-February, the next edition of our diocesan magazine, **The Catholic Mirror**, will provide information on past responses and our current procedures. This will hopefully clear up many misunderstandings that exist.

Finally, on Sunday, April 7 at 2 p.m., there will be two diocesan Prayer Services, to be held simultaneously at St. Michael’s Cathedral in Springfield and at St. Joseph Church, Pittsfield.

It is my hope that all will join in some aspect of this effort as a sign of our collective commitment to victims that we are truly sorry for our church’s past failure and remain steadfast in our ongoing efforts to prevent any future abuse.

I thank you in advance for your prayerful support.

In Christ,

Most Rev. Mitchell T. Rozanski
Bishop of Springfield