



DIOCESE OF DULUTH

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September 12, 2020

The Most Holy Name of Mary

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you may have heard this week, Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Father Michel Mulloy, who had been appointed to be our next bishop and was to be ordained October 1st. Sadly, at the same time we were informed that the Diocese of Rapid City, where Father Mulloy is a priest, had received an accusation against Father Mulloy of the sexual abuse of a minor in the 1980s.

We grieve with all who have suffered sexual abuse and with their loved ones. I ask you in particular to pray for the person who has come forward with this accusation, for Father Mulloy, for the people of our diocese and the Diocese of Rapid City, and for all affected.

For us, this means that we are, again, awaiting the appointment of a new bishop. I have been asked to continue to serve as Diocesan Administrator as we await our new bishop. I ask for your continued prayers.

I know that this news comes as a shock and a disappointment. With the closing of our diocesan bankruptcy last October, the unexpected death of our spiritual father, Bishop Paul Sirba in December, and the trials of dealing with the pandemic that included a suspension of public Masses beginning in March, the faithful of our Diocese have already been through a lot. Then came the joy of learning a new bishop had been appointed for us, only to be faced with this sudden reversal. Although we are sad, we are not without hope.

Like generations of Catholics before us, many of whom endured much more than this, “through our trials we place our trust and hope in God’s loving providence, knowing that “all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

As we move forward together, I encourage all of us, to persevere in faithful witness to the love and mercy of God, as we join our hearts together, at home and in church, through this Holy Communion that we share. We believe deeply that trusting in God’s guiding hand, nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, surround us with your loving care now, and throughout the days to come.

Yours in Christ,

Very Reverend James B. Bissonette

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Diocesan Administrator