



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

P.O. Box 23825 • Green Bay, WI 54305-3825 • 920-272-8194 • FAX 920-435-1330

September 17, 2018

Dear Friends in Christ,

In recent days, Bishop Robert Morneau, retired Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Green Bay requested a special meeting with me. He wanted to let me know that he was formally requesting a withdrawal from all public ministry because in 1979, he failed to report to authorities an incident of clergy abuse of a minor. It is important that I make this very clear, Bishop Morneau did not abuse children, and was never accused of having done so. Rather, he mishandled this allegation of abuse. Bishop Morneau felt at the time he had done what was asked of him by helping the parties to reconcile.

In light of the public revelations of abuse in the church and the call for more accountability on the part of bishops, Bishop Morneau feels great remorse over the fact that this same priest went on to abuse several other minors. He wants to right himself with God and the People of God.

I have now officially granted his request to “withdraw from public ministry” since his retirement was already accepted by the Holy See in 2013, at the required age of 75. In his withdrawal from public ministry Bishop Morneau will spend his time in prayer for all victims and survivors of sexual abuse and will do corporal works of mercy in reparation.

I have great respect for Bishop Morneau for his many years of service to those within and outside the diocese. Bishop Morneau is a good and faithful man who did what he felt was right at the time, realizing now that he could have and should have done more to protect the innocent.

I offer my prayers for continued strength and healing for all survivors of clergy abuse. We also pray for Bishop Morneau as he continues his journey.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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