



**Statement to the Clergy, Consecrated and Lay of the Diocese  
From the Most Reverend Paul J. Swain  
Bishop of Sioux Falls**

**August 29, 2018**

*Memorial Feast of the Passion of Saint John the Baptist*

***RESPONSE TO REVELATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY CLERGY***

The current tragedy in the Church resulting from renewed allegations of child sexual abuse in Pennsylvania and around the world over many decades coupled with the allegations of the former papal representative to the Church in America and ambassador to the United States, Archbishop Carlo Viganò, suggesting a cover-up at the highest levels of the Church concerning former-Cardinal Theodore Mc-Carrick are shocking, demoralizing, and, rightly, shake the faith of the faithful. Most importantly, we are reminded through these revelations that harm, true burdens and the lingering reality of abuse, have been borne by our brothers and sisters in Christ for many years. Our hearts long to help all who carry wounds caused by abuse.

While I have no personal knowledge of any of these matters, I fully associate myself with the recommendations of Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, outlined in his statement issued on August 27, 2018. Specifically, I echo the Cardinal's request that Pope Francis authorize an apostolic visitation by independent lay leaders who have been fully empowered to investigate these allegations and to recommend procedures to assure greater accountability of bishops.

In response to these challenging times, we in the Diocese of Sioux Falls can pray and seek to atone in our own ways to the harm done and the lingering hurt of those who have experienced the horror of child sexual abuse wherever it occurred.

**Therefore, I am asking all Catholics, but especially priests, deacons and all who minister in the name of Church, to pray daily if possible but especially every Thursday, the day Our Lord instituted the Priesthood and the Holy Eucharist, the attached Prayer for Healing of Victims of Abuse and the Prayer for Reparation of Priests. I also encourage those who are able to fast on Thursdays according to the norms of the Church and to spend time in adoration as well.**

In addition, I once again announce my intention to pray a Mass of Healing for Victims and Reparation for all children who have been harmed in this evil way and to reassure them of Our Lord's love for them and Our Lady's care for them on Saturday, September 15, the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. The Mass will begin at 9 a.m. in our Cathedral of St. Joseph.

"Let the children come to me and do not hinder them<sup>1</sup>." our Lord cautioned, an admonition we must take to heart. For, as St. Paul reminds us, we belong to Christ.<sup>2</sup>

As I noted in my previous statement: “The evil one is real, taunting and challenging us. Jesus crucified and risen is also real. He instituted the Church and governs her still. We take solace in His promise that the gates of hell will not prevail against her, as hard as that seems in times like these to believe. I do believe. That is the Church I professed faith in so many years ago and reaffirm today.

“May Christ, the Divine Physician, heal those who have been harmed, and may Mary, Mother of the Church, intercede for those entrusted to the care of her Son’s children that we may live up to our high calling.”

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1- Matthew 19:14  
2- 1 Corinthians 1:10-17