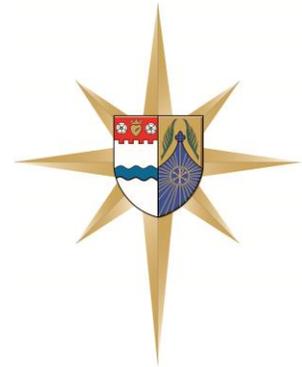


To People of the Diocese  
From Bishop Stephen J. Berg  
August 15, 2018



*The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with great sadness and anger that I have received the latest news about what is going on in Pennsylvania. I know that we all share in the pain of our Church for what is being revealed at this time.

The Grand Jury findings in Pennsylvania have concluded that there over a thousand cases of abuse of children by over three hundred priests. The evidence being revealed is graphic, tragic, despicable, and compounds what we have known in the past. The conclusion of the Grand Jury is that Catholic Bishops, Priests and others were responsible for covering up the atrocities.

We were all stunned by the earlier revelations about Cardinal McCarrick; as well as the silence of Bishops, Priests and others who knew of his condition and activities.

I am heartbroken to know that our leadership has allowed this violation of trust and caused grave damage to the lives, health and faith of God's people; most especially the harm to the children and vulnerable.

I agree that Justice requires all of those in Church leadership who knew of these crimes and misconduct be held accountable, morally and legally, for their actions.

We have acted vigorously in this Diocese to set in place training, structures, and vigilant supervision so that such abuse does not happen here. I pledge to give my best and utmost efforts to a safe environment in parishes, schools and communities. It is incumbent on us all to take this firm pledge and follow through with vigilance for the safety of the little ones among us.

How painful this is to address today, on this Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, our Mother. Her Assumption into heaven was precisely accomplished by God that we the Church would see an unblemished Mother, assumed into heaven body and soul, uncorrupted. She is with us, at the foot of the cross on our own modern day Calvary, and she gives us hope to hold on to as we seek to weather this awful storm.

As a small, yet powerful gesture of our solidarity with the victims and as a sign of how seriously we are taking our responsibility in safeguarding minors and bringing healing to the wounded, as shepherd, I am requiring every Catholic parish in Southern Colorado to begin immediately offering one Mass intention every month as such: "For the intentions of the victims of clergy child abuse, and in reparation for the crimes of the perpetrators."

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Stephen J. Berg  
Diocese of Pueblo