

D I O C E S E
of NEW ULM

Office of the Bishop

March 10, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You have likely heard the news that the Diocese of New Ulm and parishes within it have settled our bankruptcy reorganization case. The final approval of the settlement plan means survivors will soon begin to receive compensation for the harm they endured. However, while our case is closed, our work to protect the young and the vulnerable continues now and forever.

The courage that claimants showed in coming forward to share how the Church failed them has changed our Church for the better. Our ministry is safer for children and young people, our practices and policies are more open and transparent, and we are more humble. I again apologize to survivors for the harm caused by actions and inaction by some members of the clergy and Church leaders in the past.

We all need to thank survivors of sexual abuse for coming forward to share their experiences and advocate for changes to help protect children and young people. We all need to reach out to survivors in any way we can, either personally or as a parish, and make sure they know they are welcome in our Church. I encourage all local Catholics to pray for survivors' healing, as I do every day.

I also want to thank you for helping your parish contribute to the settlement with survivors and for your participation in child protection and safe environment efforts in your local communities. There are some new procedures that we will put in place under the settlement, however many of the steps identified to protect children and young people are already being followed in our parishes and schools. It is important that we see these safe environment requirements not as mere boxes to check but instead as real ways we can learn new information and adopt new tools to help protect all God's children.

As we are reminded in the second reading for the third Sunday of Lent:

Brothers and sisters:


*Since we have been justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have gained access by faith
to this grace in which we stand,
and we boast in hope of the glory of God.
And hope does not disappoint,
because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (Romans 5:1-2, 5)*



We must never forget that this chapter of Church history happened. We as Catholics must always remain committed – and vigilant – to help prevent harm to the young and vulnerable. We must also be filled with hope because together we can help keep all God’s children safe now and in the future, as well as help bring healing to those who suffered abuse in the past.

Please continue to pray for hope, healing and peace for those harmed and for all of us in this local Church. Together, with faith in Christ, we can look to the future with hope.

In Christ,

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The Most Reverend John M. LeVoir
Bishop of New Ulm

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