

Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton's Victim Statement

David A. Franklin's State Sentencing Hearing

Jefferson County Courthouse

Feb. 8, 2021

Thank you, Your Honor. As I had mentioned before, Pope Francis repeatedly has called the church a field hospital as we reach out to those in greatest of need, those in need of healing, and those on the peripheries of society. This ministry requires financial resources, resources that we were denied for years.

As the bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Steubenville I express my gratitude to those who exercised due diligence from the preparation of the forensic accounting investigation to the state of Ohio's investigation into Mr. Franklin's actions, including the present action by our local judicial system.

Diocesan chancery positions were eliminated and austerity measures employed in each department resultant of financial misinformation, irregularities, and lack of transparency. To put it bluntly, people lost their jobs.

Many people, locally and diocesan-wide, have had their trust in the church compromised. We are all too aware it is easy and relatively quick to lose one's trust, but the arduous and longer road is in the work to regain that very same trust. This is all the more true in small communities like our own.

The Diocese of Steubenville, this Appalachian field hospital, has endeavored on this long road in order to be effective in sharing the faith, hope, and charity of Christ with all whom we encounter. Our success as credible missionary disciples demands nothing less. Thank you.