



THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO  
Office of the Bishop

September 23, 2018  
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we join together to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time we are confronted once again with a new development in the ongoing scandal regarding past clerical sexual abuse allegations within the Church. This past Friday, September 21, 2018, we learned that the Michigan Attorney General's Office announced Mr. Schuette's intention to conduct an investigation into the handling of clergy sexual abuse allegations by the Catholic Church within the seven dioceses of Michigan, going back as far as 1950. We have released our public statement indicating our commitment to cooperate fully with this investigation. Additionally, as we stated, we welcome the opportunity to review the many and extensive efforts that have been made over these past 16 years since 2002 to protect all God's people. We look forward to learning of any new ways or methods to further enhance all the steps we are already taking.

With this letter I wish to encourage you to continue to join with me first and foremost in prayer. In addition to devoting Tuesdays as Days of Prayer and Fasting, I invite everyone to attend one of the three planned Masses of Reparation and Healing for the Diocese (see schedule below). After each of these Masses will be a time for pastoral conversation. I encourage all to be fully informed of the Church's response and visit our dedicated website which has a wealth of information and resources: [www.protect.diozkoo.org](http://www.protect.diozkoo.org) including "A Plan to Protect" which was released on September 14, 2018, and calls for additional measures.

Together, as the Body of Christ, we will emerge from this time of darkness, even stronger and more equipped into a time of recommitment to protect all children and vulnerable people and to eradicate the evil of sexual abuse from any corner of the Church. May we keep all victims and survivors of clergy sexual abuse in our daily prayers for their continued healing. May we also be strengthened in our commitment to be ever-vigilant to protect the most precious and vulnerable among us. May Mary, the Mother of the Church, watch over us and protect us.

Assuring you of my daily prayers, and humbly asking for your prayers for me as well, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

*+ Paul J. Bradley*

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

**Mass of Reparation and Healing Schedule:**

September 30, 2018, 3 p.m.: St. Augustine Cathedral, Kalamazoo  
October 7, 2018, 3 p.m.: St. Philip Parish, Battle Creek  
October 13, 2018, 6 p.m.: St. Joseph Parish, St. Joseph



MASSES OF  
REPARATION  
AND HEALING  
FOR THE CHURCH

BISHOP PAUL J.  
BRADLEY,  
CELEBRANT

SEPTEMBER 30, 3 P.M.  
ST. AUGUSTINE  
CATHEDRAL

542 W. MICHIGAN AVE.  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49007

OCTOBER 7, 3 P.M.  
ST. PHILIP PARISH

112 CAPITAL AVE NE  
BATTLE CREEK, MI 49017

OCTOBER 13, 6 P.M.  
ST. JOSEPH PARISH,

DOWNTOWN - 220 CHURCH ST  
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

At this critically important moment in the life of our Church we are called to come together in prayer and devote our time for the intentions of the continued healing of all victims of abuse and for the ongoing reparation and healing of our Church. There will be time for Pastoral Conversation following the Masses.



DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO  
[www.diokzoo.org](http://www.diokzoo.org) - 269.349.8714



## A Plan of Action to Protect

*As People of Faith, we know that prayer and sacrifice are two of the most powerful spiritual resources made available to us by Jesus to help us combat the presence of sin and evil in our lives. For that reason, in the face of the despicable revelations of clergy sexual abuse of minors and sexual harassment of vulnerable adults, including allegations against several Bishops, as well as the mishandling of allegations brought forward, I have committed myself to additional prayer and sacrifice, and have urged all our priests and Faithful people to do the same. It is through prayer and sacrifice that we can open ourselves to God's transforming grace, to purify us and to move our souls to conversion of mind and heart, particularly for those who have betrayed their promises of Sacred Orders.*

*In addition to prayer and sacrifice, we need a clear plan for what additional steps will be taken to ensure that those entrusted to our pastoral care always enjoy personal safety and complete freedom from sexual abuse. For that reason, I announce the following Plan of Action, for the good of all the Faithful, but most especially our dear children and young people.*

1. To remain steadfast in our support for and solidarity with survivors of abuse, constantly striving to improve our pastoral care for victims and their families.
2. To evaluate and refine all of the Safe Environment Programs and practices already in place, and to employ further measures to ensure that the mandate of full compliance on the part of all clergy, lay leaders, and Church personnel is achieved.
3. To review and expand avenues of reporting for those who have been victimized, so that they can come forward without hesitation or fear to share their experience of sexual abuse, in order that we can offer a just and caring response to victims and ensure no perpetrators remain in ministry or leadership.
4. To hold listening sessions with the Bishop in the context of Masses and Holy Hours of Reparation, in the various regions and apostolates of the Diocese.
5. To establish a Consultative Lay Body of Experts to advise on policy and procedure with regard to situations of abuse within the Church and her organizations.

6. To create and require a **Code of Conduct** for all clergy and lay leaders within the Church.
7. After consultation with the Independent Diocesan Review Board, to **release the names of those priests** for whom sexual abuse of minors has been substantiated.
8. To continue to provide **transparency and cooperation with civil authorities** and to seek further collaboration in dealing with any incidences of abuse within the Church. Continue to turn over all credible claims to civil authorities for investigation and appropriate prosecution, if warranted.
9. To **make priests' files accessible**, once again, for review by the Independent Diocesan Review Board, which is composed of professional lay people and offers direction on the proper handling of cases of abuse.
10. To **do whatever further steps it takes** to eradicate sexual abuse within the Church.

*This **Plan of Action to Protect** is our initial response to the current situation as we know it. We stand ready to make further adjustments, additions, and other actions as may be required in light of any new revelations.*

*At the end of the story of the "Rich Young Man" in the Gospel of Matthew, after the young man went away sad because what Jesus was asking of him to find salvation was too challenging for him (Mt. 19: 16-26), the Apostles asked Jesus: "Who then can be saved?". Jesus answered them, as He answers us in this challenging moment: "For human beings this is impossible, but with God, all things are possible." That is the Truth that we hold on to with conviction and confidence. The human element within the Church, which includes me and all of us, is made up of sinful and imperfect human beings; however, we pray that all of us are striving for holiness and salvation. In addition, we believe with our very beings that God's Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church, and as Jesus promised, "the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. (Mt.16:19). Therefore, as we move forward in Faith, let us be confident that God will guide us in the right ways. May this **Plan of Action to Protect** be a part of God's Plan for His Church, at this particular point in time, here in the Diocese of Kalamazoo, because, as we know, "with God all things are possible".*

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo  
September 14, 2018