



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

## DIocese OF BRIDGEPORT

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October 1, 2019

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I write today to inform you that retired Connecticut Superior Court Judge Robert Holzberg has released the *Clerical Sexual Abuse Accountability Report* for our Diocese, which I commissioned on October 3, 2018.

The report, nearly a year in the making, was compiled by the Judge and his investigative team who had unfettered access to diocesan files, reviewing over 250,000 records, hundreds of thousands of individual documents, inspection of parish offices, files, and computers and interviews with key participants. It provides an independent and comprehensive accounting of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy along with the response of diocesan leadership since the inception of the diocese in 1953. It is available in its entirety on the diocesan website, ([www.bridgeportdiocese.org](http://www.bridgeportdiocese.org)) and includes an executive summary for the reader.

While this is a difficult day in the life of our Church, I hope and pray that it is also an historic step toward closure and reconciliation for all those affected by the crisis, particularly the victims and their families who have suffered so much. The report explores a deep wound in the life of our Church, one that has profoundly changed and challenged all of us. Yet there is reason for hope because so much work has already been done to create awareness, to protect our children and prevent future abuse.

I believe the publication of the report is a crucial step forward, among many other pastoral and administrative measures that the Diocese has taken over the last eighteen years, to ensure complete accountability and transparency in the handling of abuse and also to maintain the strongest Safe Environment policies to protect our children and young people.

Together with the *Financial Accountability Report* which was originally published in October 2018, this report continues our commitment to full and ongoing transparency in these matters. Furthermore, the first annual update of the *Financial Accountability Report*, expected to be released before December 31, 2019, will include a full accounting of the costs associated with the Judge's Report.

I wish again to offer my profound and heartfelt apology to all who have suffered abuse at the hands of any cleric in our Diocese. I also apologize to all those who have lost a sense of trust or feel betrayed by Church leadership. My personal commitment is to do whatever is humanly possible to eradicate this evil from our midst. I also pledge to swiftly implement the recommendations included in Judge Holzberg's Report in the months ahead.

As we move forward, I wish to thank those survivors and family members who have joined our efforts to prevent this crime from ever happening again. Likewise, to our good and faithful priests, who represent the vast majority of those in ministry, I recognize the pain and challenges you face in this time of challenge and remain grateful for your support.

Finally, I wish to thank Judge Holzberg, who served as lead investigator and his team for their exhaustive work on this effort and their professionalism throughout the process.

It is my sincere hope and prayer that with the release of this historic report, we can come to terms with the sins of the past, move towards deeper reconciliation, continue to walk with our survivors on their journey of healing, and work together for the spiritual renewal of the diocese.

I ask for your prayers and support as we work together to renew our Diocesan Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano  
Bishop of Bridgeport