



OFFICE OF THE
APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

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March 29, 2019

Dear Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Diocese,

As the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, it has been a great joy to walk with you these past months, though they have been difficult ones, and in doing so to gain your trust, your confidence, and your friendship. I feel very much a member of your family and it pains me deeply to now confront with you this latest development in the saga surrounding your former bishop's tenure.

As you know, the investigation I was asked by the Holy Father to oversee - and the resulting preliminary report, have been completed and have been submitted to the Holy See, pending further review and action. In the meantime, litigation recently brought against the Diocese alleging that diocesan child protection measures were not only insufficient but disregarded, allowing harm to be perpetrated by ministers of the Church. We are addressing this lawsuit appropriately and with the utmost seriousness while steadfastly affirming our ongoing commitment to the rigorous policies and practices in place to ensure the absolute protection of those young people entrusted to our care.

In this journey of Lent, we are reminded constantly of our need for repentance and renewal. Together as a faith-filled family, we confront our frailty, our failings and sinfulness together. We make our way to the cross at Calvary, fully aware of the sacrifice that the Lord Jesus accepted on our behalf - the sins that he bore for us - so that we might be forgiven and healed. We have no more urgent or necessary mission than to bring about the healing and renewal of our Church, both here in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, and across our nation and Church universal. This is the responsibility indeed of us all - and the obligation especially of those who bear the mantle of shepherd as bishops and pastors.

I ask for your patience and I thank you for your faithfulness. I am often reminded of the Gospel passage when Jesus confronts his disciples with the fact that many had turned back, "and no longer walked with him." Jesus asks the twelve - "Do you want to leave too?" "Simon Peter replied, "Lord, to whom would we go? You alone have the words of eternal life."

Together as family - let us cling to this assurance and support one another with constant prayers, gestures of kindness, words of comfort and encouragement. Please know that you are constantly in my thoughts and in my prayers. I look forward to being with you again very soon.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Apostolic Administrator
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston