



**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

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29 October 2018

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The United States Bishops are joining together in a commitment of prayer and reparation leading up the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' General Assembly in Baltimore, where we will be making critical decisions in response to the clergy sexual abuse of minors crisis in the United States of America. With my brother bishops across the nation, I will be dedicating myself to seven days of intensified prayer and fasting before this meeting, from Monday, 5 November 2018, through Sunday 11 November 2018. The intentions for this period of prayer and sacrifice are three-fold:

- ❖ For the healing and support of all victims of clergy sexual abuse of minors;
- ❖ For the conversion and just punishment of the perpetrators and concealers;
- ❖ For the strength of the Bishops to be holy shepherds in protecting and leading their sheep from all harm.

If you feel called to do so, you are welcome to join me in praying for these intentions. I would also be grateful for any prayers for me and my brother bishops during our general assembly, that we may follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in responding to the horrific actions of clergy sexual abuse of minors in the Church.

Together with God's help, we can ensure that the sinful actions of the past will have no place in the present, and that they will not define us in the future. My only hope is that we can repair the trust of our Catholic family of faith and the wider community by virtue of our action today and in the future.

With appreciation for your prayers during this difficult time in the life of the Church, and the assurance of my prayers for you and your family, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert  
Bishop of Allentown