

Prayers needed as bishops discuss abuse

On Monday evening, June 10, at 7:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Cathedral, I will be presiding at a service for healing and hope in anticipation of the Plenary Assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to be held in Dallas from Thursday through Saturday of next week. I have sent invitations to all of our pastors and pastoral administrators to come to the cathedral with interested parishioners. And, in recognition that coming to Sacred Heart is not practical for all, I have invited parish leaders to provide similar opportunities for their communities on Monday evening. We have sent worship aids and suggested prayer formats to all parishes in the hope that they might prove helpful to them.

Whether you are able or not to participate physically in any of the Monday-evening services, I do ask you to join the church at prayer in any way that you can. Please pray in your own way, at your own pace and in your own time. But please do pray for the healing of victims and that we bishops will be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I ask you to pray that we will have humility to listen, wisdom to choose the best course of action and the courage to change what needs to be changed.

A great many of you have written or spoken to me, expressing your support

along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



and prayer as we deal with this wrenching and painful issue. Your faith strengthens my own. I remember many times a day the core message that you so often share with me in a variety of ways, "This is very painful, but we will get through it." To me it bespeaks your faith in the promise of Christ to be with us always. I am deeply grateful for your generosity and am much encouraged by the depth of your trust in the Lord.

It is for your encouragement that I share with you some information on prayer support received today from Archbishop Harry Flynn, who chairs the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse.

1. For the 48 hours of our meeting in Dallas, there will be eucharistic adoration at the hotel, supported by the faithful of Dallas. The focus of the prayer will be for the healing of victims of sexual abuse, for the bishops gathered in Dallas and for

healing and reconciliation for the church. Representatives of victims advocacy groups will be a part of that prayer.

2. Archbishop Flynn invites us bishops to join in that prayer for all who have been deeply hurt by those who acted in the name of the church. He invites us on Friday evening and through the night to spend an hour in prayer to pray for victims by name.

3. The archbishop also encourages in all dioceses opportunities for prayer such as the ones to which I invite you on the evening of Monday, June 10.

I thank you very much once again for the generous support, prayer and encouragement you have offered to me during this painful time. And I thank you most especially for your prayer for all victims of abuse at the hands of those especially trusted because they ministered in the name of the church. Their healing and the avoidance of this tragedy in the future are at the heart of our preparation for the Dallas meeting.

Let me conclude as the archbishop concludes his letter, "Prayer is the most important tool we have as we prepare for Dallas and as we ask the Lord to send his Holy Spirit to grant us the wisdom and courage to do his holy will at this critical moment in the life of the Church."

Peace to all.



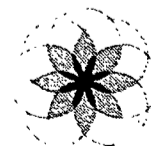
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