



DIOCESE OF WINONA - ROCHESTER

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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October 19, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

On Oct. 14, 2021, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota confirmed a Plan of Reorganization for the Diocese of Winona-Rochester. This plan was jointly submitted by the Diocese and the Committee of Unsecured Creditors, who represent the survivors of sexual abuse.

I want to express my deepest apology to the survivors of sexual abuse in the Church. You trusted those who were to keep you safe and they betrayed that trust. When that trust was placed in a priest who took away your innocence, that experience was deeply devastating and traumatic. I am deeply sorry. My prayers are joined to countless others, as we commend you for your bravery and ask the Lord to bring you healing and wholeness.

After seeing so much pain and suffering in the lives of the survivors, the Diocese of Winona-Rochester is resolved to maintain a safe environment in every parish, Catholic school and related institution by insisting on training for every priest, deacon, religious, teacher, employee and volunteer, who has any contact with underage persons or vulnerable adults. We are committed to staying vigilant, because training has opened our eyes both to identifying the signs of grooming behaviors with minors and to reporting concerns about possible abuse to law enforcement.

I remain very grateful to our Catholic Community across the twenty counties of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester. You have taught me to be hope-filled amid the challenges of the clergy scandals in the Church and to remain committed to seek justice for the survivors of sexual abuse. You taught me to remain anchored with a deep faith in Jesus Christ and be sustained by His presence in the Eucharist.

Blessed are you for being committed to the great good done by the Church through the ministries of education, healthcare and service to the poor.

Blessed are you for affirming your pastors and priests and for helping them and me, your bishop, to seek the holiness of Jesus Christ.

Blessed are you for your lives of Christian witness and faithfulness to the Gospel.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. John M. Quinn
Bishop of Winona-Rochester