

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Mailing Address
POST OFFICE BOX F
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
18105-1538

4029 WEST TILGHMAN STREET
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18104
(610) 437-0755
Fax (610) 433-7822

September 20, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As your Bishop, I wanted to let you know that the Diocese of Allentown is cooperating with a statewide investigation being conducted by the Office of the State Attorney General looking at how six Pennsylvania dioceses handled allegations of abuse.

Back in 2002, the Diocese of Allentown shared with the District Attorneys of the five counties that make up the Diocese, the records of priests against whom allegations of abuse of minors had been made. Since then, we have notified the relevant District Attorneys of claims of abuse. The State Attorney General's Office has subpoenaed our records on all possible abusers, and we are in the process of turning over that material.


The Diocese of Allentown is committed to the protection and safety of the children and young people entrusted to its care. To this end, it is the policy of the Diocese of Allentown to cooperate with law enforcement. We will cooperate with the Attorney General's Office just as we have cooperated with the District Attorneys.

Abuse of minors is a grave sin and crime. The Diocese of Allentown has zero tolerance for offenders and, as noted above, reports allegations of abuse to the appropriate authorities. The Diocese also has educated, and will continue to educate, thousands of children and adults on how to spot and report abuse to the proper authorities. In addition, we provide assistance to victims of abuse.

I urge anyone who knows of incidents of abuse, in the Church or outside it, to report it to the State ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313, the State Attorney General's hotline at 1-888-538-8541 or to local law enforcement. As noted in all of our church bulletins and in the Diocesan newspaper, the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator is available to provide assistance to anyone, who as a minor, was abused by a priest, deacon or employee or volunteer of the Diocese or its parishes. Her direct line is 1-800-791- 9209

Please join me in praying for all victims of abuse both in the Church and in society at large, as well as for their families.

Sincerely in Christ,


Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Allentown