



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bishop Paul J. Bradley releases statement following USCCB national meeting

KALAMAZOO, Mich.: (November 16, 2018): Following the recently concluded Fall General Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley released the following statement affirming the Diocese of Kalamazoo's commitment to moving forward with its previously announced "A Plan to Protect", calling for enhanced measures to keep children and vulnerable people safe and protected. Bishop Bradley also offers his personal reflection on the historic three-day meeting which can be found at www.diokzoo.org and <https://catholickalamazoo.blogspot.com/>

Bishop Bradley's Statement:

"This week, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) annual Fall General Assembly began with the unexpected news of the Holy See's request to delay final voting on any initiatives or policies related to the clergy sexual abuse crisis. This request was made to postpone this vote until after the world-wide meeting of Bishops' Conferences that Pope Francis has called for in February 2019 to address this matter globally.

"While the four initiatives proposed to provide greater transparency and accountability for Bishops on a national level will be delayed, I take this opportunity to reaffirm my commitment to continue working here in the Diocese of Kalamazoo to strengthen all our current policies and to move forward with establishing any new initiatives that may be needed.

"We will continue to advance the 'A Plan to Protect'. As part of fulfilling this 10-point plan, I will soon appoint and convene a Commission of lay experts to review all our diocesan policies and procedures regarding safe environment. I will also be asking this commission to make recommendations on new and better ways for me to be more accountable as Bishop. Our diocesan-wide plan also calls for all our priests, deacons and lay leaders who work with young people to sign a Code of Conduct; I will also be signing this Code. Additionally, given the current investigation of the Michigan Attorney General of all Catholic Dioceses in Michigan, we are trying to understand in what ways we are able to move forward with our intention to release the names of those priests against whom credible allegations of child sexual abuse have been made.

“I remain hopeful that our collective efforts, here in our Diocese, at the USCCB, and throughout the Universal Church, will be instrumental in eradicating the scourge of the sexual abuse crisis in the Church. For that to be successful, we need more than policies and procedures; we need a renewed commitment on the part of all of us to grow in holiness and to strengthen our relationship with our Lord Jesus. Finally, please join me in praying for all victims and survivors of clergy sexual abuse that they may be healed and be certain of God’s love, and the Church’s concern, for them.”