



Archdiocese of New Orleans

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September 20, 2018

To: Clergy, Religious and Laity in the Archdiocese of New Orleans

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

In this week's Clarion Herald, which you will receive after Mass, I have outlined specific initial steps we as bishops are taking to address the serious sin of sexual abuse.

We continue to experience deep sorrow for the victims and survivors of abuse by church leaders. This is a time of prayer for their healing and asking God to help us purify the church.

Jesus reminds us that sometimes prayer and fasting are needed for true healing (*Mark 9:29*). I invite you to consider joining me in prayer and fasting each Friday from now through December 2018.

Some may ask, "Why should I pray and fast? I am not at fault." While this is true, we remember the words of St. Paul: "If one member suffers, all the members suffer; if one member is honored, all the members share its joy" (*1 Corinthians 12:26*).

Fasting and prayer on Fridays is a way we can be in solidarity with those who have been abused, to pray for their healing and to ask the Holy Spirit to lead our church to renewal. Fasting can be abstaining from food or any other sacrifice, for example spending less time on social media or humbly doing something for someone to show charity.

Once again, in the name of church leaders, I am sorry for the pain of those who have been hurt and for the disappointment of the people of God in our leadership as bishops.

Wishing you God's blessings, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

**Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans**

GMA/mk