March 22, 2019

BRIDGEPORT—The Diocese of Bridgeport has released an update on efforts to address sexual abuse crisis.

In a letter published today, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano provides information on the reorganization and addition of new names to the diocesan list of credibly accused clergy and a complete list of clergy on whose behalf settlements have been paid.

The Diocese has published information on its website regarding credibly accused clergy and its ongoing response to the clerical sexual abuse crisis.

In a letter published today, the bishop's letter includes a report by retired Connecticut Superior Court Justice Robert Holzberg, summarizing his work process to date on the investigation he is leading into clergy sexual abuse of minors in the diocese and the response of diocesan officials since its founding in 1953. The Judge's letter is available online. His final report will be published no sooner than June 30 of this year.

Additionally, the bishop's letter introduces a hotline for reporting information to Judge Holzberg and announces three upcoming listening sessions throughout the diocese, which will give people an opportunity to express questions and concerns related to the crisis.

The main hotline number for English speakers is 833-990-0004, and for Spanish speaking: 800-216-1288.
The toll-free lines have been set up by the Judge's investigative team for any person who wishes to provide information related to past incidents of abuse or their experience with the diocese in regards to such abuse. Survivors and witness are encouraged to call or report online: www.lighthouse-services.com/diobpt.

The updated list of credibly accused adds the names of ten additional priests, eight of whom are deceased diocesan priests; one visiting priest from a Venezuelan diocese who spent the summer of 1991 in the Diocese of Bridgeport, and one living diocesan priest who has not served in the Diocese since 1984.

"It is with much regret and concern for all those who are survivors of sexual abuse that I must announce that the following ten clergy served in the Diocese of Bridgeport have been added to our list of Credibly Accused Clergy as of today."


The Bishop notes that the list will continue to be updated as ongoing investigations continue into past allegations relating to deceased priests or as other matters come forward.

In his letter to the faithful the bishop reports that addition of names of priests to the List of Credibly accused is a result of three factors including 1. the expansion of Sexual Misconduct Review Board policy to consider allegations of abuse against deceased clergy; 2. the receiving of new allegations of sexual abuse of minors against clergy in the diocese dating back many years; and 3. the decision to re-review certain cases where new information has become available, or where further review was deemed necessary. These reviews included allegations against both living and deceased clergy.

In September 2018, in response to the revelations concerning Cardinal McCarrick and the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report, Bishop Caggiano issued a letter on the pastoral and administrative steps the diocese would take to provide full transparency and a comprehensive report.

"I am committed to remaining transparent and instituting whatever change is needed to better respond to those affected by abuse. I recognize that any restoration of trust will require a continued diligent effort on my part, as well as on the part of all of us who love the Church," he wrote in his initial letter to the faithful.

The Diocesan Listening Sessions are set April 3, 7:30 pm at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield; April 9, 7:30 pm at St. Joseph High School in Trumbull; and May 1, 6:30 pm at Immaculate High School in Danbury. The bishop personally will answer questions and listen to concerns. All are welcome.

"I remain determined to move forward with whatever tangible steps are possible to address this grave matter here in the Diocese of Bridgeport. I encourage you to attend one of these listening sessions," said bishop in his March letter.

To learn more or read the Bishop's letter, please visit the Diocese of Bridgeport's Pledge to Protect (http://www.bridgeportdiocese.org/pledge/welcome/) website.

Click to read the Bishop's letter (https://www.bridgeportdiocese.org/bishops-march-2019-update-letter/)