DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG OFFICE OF THE BISHOP



(717) 657-4804 FAX (717) 657-1370 4800 Union Deposit Road Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17111-3710 Bishop'sOffice@hbgdiocese.org www.hbgdiocese.org

STATEMENT OF BISHOP RONALD W. GAINER ON CONFIDENTIALITY PROVISIONS IN DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE SETTLEMENTS

August 1, 2018

In 2002, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops first enacted the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Under Article 3 of the *Charter*, Catholic dioceses are forbidden from entering into settlement provisions that bind parties to confidentiality, unless such relief is specifically requested by the survivor. The Diocese of Harrisburg has reviewed its historical files and learned that prior to 2002, the Diocese from time-to-time entered into settlement agreements with survivors of child sexual abuse and some of those settlement agreements contained confidentiality provisions. Though it has been the Diocese's policy for some time not to enforce those confidentiality provisions, I have learned that some survivors still feel constrained by them. Accordingly, on behalf of the Diocese, I waive any remaining confidentiality rights the Diocese has in those confidentiality provisions, while retaining all other rights the Diocese has under these agreements. I take this step about confidentiality so that the survivors can feel free to tell their stories to whomever and whenever they wish. I hope that this step will further aid those survivors, and perhaps others, in their path to healing.

Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer

Bishop of the Diocese of Harrisburg

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