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Publication With Respect to  
**Archdiocesan Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Child**  
 66 Brooks Drive  
 Braintree, MA 02184

**Publication With Respect to Archdiocesan Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Child**

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## Publication With Respect to Archdiocesan Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Child



### Open Letter to Survivors

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, at my direction, the Archdiocese of Boston has released a Publication With Respect To Its Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Child. With this announcement, my thoughts and prayers are with you, the survivors of clergy sexual abuse and your families. Since the early 1990s, when I became Bishop of the Diocese of Fall River, my ministry has been painfully impacted by the sexual abuse of children by members of the clergy. Over the years, most notably here in the Archdiocese of Boston and more recently during the Apostolic Visitation to Dublin, it has been my privilege to meet with hundreds of survivors and their families. In the most tragic of instances, I have met with families who have lost loved ones to suicide or drug overdose. Your voices, your stories, your faces, and your tears are prayerfully held in my heart. The nature of the abuse and the depth of the harm you have suffered because of heinous crimes committed against you by priests is a source of intense shame for me and for the Church. The past failures of Bishops and Church leaders to provide for the protection of children must be acknowledged with deep contrition.

I realize that nothing I can say will be sufficient to heal the psychological and spiritual wounds you have endured. No matter how frequently expressions of apology and remorse are offered, it is never enough. You have shown great courage by telling a terrible truth, and we as a Church must with sincerity and humility ask for your forgiveness.

I recall the extraordinary encounter between five abuse survivors from Boston and Pope Benedict XVI in Washington, DC in April 2008. At that meeting, I presented the Holy Father a hand-crafted book of the first names of survivors of clergy sexual abuse from the Archdiocese of Boston. The Holy Father gasped in sorrow as he turned the book's pages and read your names. I pointed out

to him the over fifty names of those who had died tragically marked by a small gold cross. Each one of you is a precious child of God known by name by our Creator, as witnessed by the words of the prophet Isaiah: *I will never forget you. Behold, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name. (Isaiah 49:15-16).*

Today, we take another step on this important journey of healing. The review of the names of clergy being published today will no doubt stir painful emotions among survivors and our Catholic community. It is my ardent hope that this also contributes to repairing your fractured trust and ensuring the safety of children.

As an Archdiocese, we have provided counseling and support for survivors. You have my promise that will continue as long as it is needed. We have taken steps of prevention at every level of the local church – and will continue to do so – in order to ensure that the tragedy of sexual abuse of children by clergy is never repeated.

Some of the most deeply moving moments that I have experienced in the course of meetings with survivors and family members have been when men and women who have suffered the most egregious abuse, even the death of a loved one, tell me that they are striving each day to forgive the man who abused them and in fact pray for him as part of their daily prayers. This is an extraordinary and humbling sign of God's goodness beyond all measure. May we join the example of our brothers and sisters in Christ praying for those men who have committed most grievous sins and crimes against children. May they receive the grace to turn to the mercy of God

Archdiocese of Boston Open Letter to Survivors

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grave sins and crimes against children. May they receive the grace to turn to the mercy of God seeking the gift of repentance and atonement.

With the assurance of my prayers for you and your loved ones and asking for a remembrance in your prayers as together we travel the path of hope and healing, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Archbishop of Boston

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