



CARDINAL'S OFFICE
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December 19, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent I join you in prayerful anticipation of our celebration of Christmas. It grieved me deeply to learn that your Advent prayer and worship at the vigil Mass on Saturday, December 11 was disrupted by commentary by Monsignor Kempa that was both unauthorized and uncharitable. It has been shared with me that his words in particular were deeply wounding to long time members of Holy Trinity Parish. I want to express my deepest apology to all that the pulpit, a place reserved for the proclamation and teaching of the Word of God, was used as a platform for harmful words to be expressed against members of this parish.

These past years, the reality that innocent children were violated by members of the clergy and that church leadership failed to properly respond has ruptured the bonds of trust that are at the heart of our community of faith. Please know that I remain dedicated to doing all that is necessary to reach out with compassion and respect to those who have been harmed, relying on the grace and mercy of our Lord for healing.

Please know also that the Archdiocese's Office of Pastoral Support and Outreach, under the direction of Mrs. Barbara Thorp, stands ready to assist with any matters regarding complaints of sexual abuse concerning Rev. Czeslaw Szymanski, O.S.P., who served at Holy Trinity Parish during the 1980's. Mrs. Thorp and her staff can be reached at 781-794-2581 or by way of email at bthorp@rcab.org. All inquiries will be received with sensitivity, care and confidentiality. Barbara is here with you today and will be available after Mass for anyone who would wish to speak with her.

During the Christmas Season the hearts of all Christians are moved by the mystery of the infant Jesus tenderly embraced in the arms of the Blessed Mother. We are all children of God as we gather in awe and wonder at the manger. We rejoice that the light of Jesus' birth will never be overcome by the darkness of sin, that our Lord will never abandon us.

With the assurance of my prayers and remembrance now and at Christmas, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Sean O'Malley

Archbishop of Boston