

**DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**



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August 4, 2018

Dear Faithful of the Diocese of Harrisburg:

I would like very much to be with you personally this weekend, but since that is not possible, I am relying on the kindness of your parish priest to be my voice in sharing my message with you.

This past Wednesday the Diocese of Harrisburg publicly released information regarding our own investigation into child sexual abuse.

As was publicly reported, the Diocese had previously intended to publish this information along with a list of clergy accused of sexual misconduct in 2016; however, the Attorney General's Office requested that the Diocese refrain from that effort in order to avoid any interference with the on-going Grand Jury investigation which was in progress. Now that the Grand Jury investigation has ended, and the stay and pending review ordered by the State Supreme Court is proceeding, I have made the information public on our new website at [www.youthprotectionhbg.com](http://www.youthprotectionhbg.com). There you can find our list of clergy and seminarians who were accused of sexual abuse of a person under age 18. Please note that this list is a list of accusations; we did not make assessments of credibility or guilt in finalizing this list.

My first thoughts focus on those who have experienced the pain and suffering of abuse and are survivors of such reprehensible actions. Their emotional and spiritual well-being is my primary concern. Through the years, our Diocese has worked to provide for healing for survivors who have come forward to us. The full resources of our Diocese continue to be at their service.

I apologize also to you, the people of our Diocese, whose faith and trust in our Church and its leaders has been tested. I pray that the caring ministry of today's priests, deacons and religious who have been faithful to their call, and who serve us so well day in and day out, will be for you a source of strength and renewed trust.

Our investigation has caused the Diocese to take a frank look at its past, as well as its present. The Diocese assessed whether any lingering reminders of this sad history indicated in our files remain. I have determined that anyone whose name is on a hall, room or building and is on our list of accused individuals will have his name removed from any place of honor throughout the Diocese. Upon the recommendation of my advisors, I am applying this also to my predecessors who in some cases failed to protect children. Because there are no records of these matters during Bishop Philip McDevitt's tenure, and since the time frame of our investigation began twelve years after his death, there will be no change to the name of Bishop McDevitt High School.

Please visit our website that went online Wednesday [www.youthprotectionhbg.com](http://www.youthprotectionhbg.com).

The report from the Grand Jury should be released in the very near future. It is important to get our information before you and the general public at this time. Soon our schools, religious education programs and youth ministries will resume in our parishes. I want to assure everyone that the Diocese is doing everything reasonably possible to make our Church venues safe for your children.

I want to make each one of you this promise: the Harrisburg Diocese will implement faithfully our revised Youth Protection Policy and will continue to do everything we can to ensure the safety and well-being of our children.

Please pray with me that God will grant us all the grace to meet these challenges with a spirit of humility and courage. May Mary, Mother of the Church, watch over us, especially our precious children.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Ronald W. Gainer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer  
Bishop of the Diocese of Harrisburg