



Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany  
Office of the Bishop

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,  
and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;  
For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:28-30

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Jesus gives us an invitation in those verses: “come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens.” He offers us this invitation because he knows each of us experiences burdens, worries, and troubles throughout our lives.

More recently, we’ve become aware of how many people are suffering from various forms of brokenness, trauma, and abuse. We know these burdens take many forms, including sexual abuse by a member of the clergy, by a family member, domestic violence, or human trafficking. Additionally, any number factors can cause someone to experience trauma, especially loss of a loved one, financial hardships, and health struggles. That suffering can bring about a great sense of shame, sometimes causing some to avoid seeking help. My hope, as Jesus says, is that no one will have to endure these challenges alone.

The Church has not always been proactive and responsive to the needs of people in situations like these. Despite our past faults, we are looking to extend Jesus’ invitation to each person in our Diocese.

To that extent, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany is beginning a series of “Hope and Healing Masses.” We will be hosting one Mass in each of the seven Vicariates over the coming months, the first taking place on Sunday, October 23, 2022 at 10:30am at St. Gabriel the Archangel Church in Rotterdam.

Each of these Masses will take place at a regularly scheduled weekend Mass time. They will be focused on acknowledging the trauma and hardships that each of us endure day to day, especially throughout the pandemic. After Mass, there will be counselors and members of our Hope and Healing team available for you. Maybe you’d like to share a story, learn more about what counseling could have to offer, or take some information to share with someone who you know is struggling.

This event is one step in an ongoing process of acknowledgement and healing. We will be announcing more Hope and Healing efforts as they are planned. Please use your bulletins and our website as resources: [www.rcda.org/hopeandhealing](http://www.rcda.org/hopeandhealing).

Frederick Jones, our Diocesan Assistance Coordinator is always available to help those who have been abused. His contact information is (518) 453-6646 and [assistance.coordinator@rcda.org](mailto:assistance.coordinator@rcda.org).

Please join me in prayer as we seek to bring the healing love of Christ to all who are in need.

Faithfully Yours,

*+Edward B. Scharfenberger*

Bishop Edward Scharfenberger