

BISHOP'S OFFICE
PASTORAL CENTER
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September 27, 2019

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Please accept a personal invitation to join me on Friday evening, October 11, 2019, for an evening of prayer for survivors, their families and friends, at 7:00 p.m. in All Saints Church. We will pray together for victims of abuse, their families, our parishes, clergy, religious and laypersons, and especially for those who have lost heart because of the darkness of sin and evil.

We will also pray for your intentions and for the graces to grow together spiritually as we advance the cause of protecting children and vulnerable adults, extend pastoral care to those who suffer from abuse or trauma, and serve the Church in our respective roles during current challenges. All clergy and members of the diocese are invited to join us.

Our prayer service will offer Scripture readings, prayers, and my own reflections. We will also hear a survivor's testimony and pray the *Healing Voices Litany of Love*, which is a prayer written and prayed regularly by Catholic survivors of clergy abuse from across the United States and Canada. Special candles will be blessed and presented to parish representatives during the service so they may be included whenever a parish or small group gathers to pray for all who are affected by abuse and trauma.

On Wednesday, December 18, 2019, we will gather again at our Cathedral mindful that the holidays are very difficult for those who are wounded by grief, abuse and trauma.

Please do your best to attend both of these gatherings as a visible sign of our dedication to Christian witness and service for those who are suffering and alienated and for all in our diocese to find the courage to gather together in prayer.

The best support we can offer the survivors in our parish families is to accompany them personally by our presence and prayer, as Pope Francis has exhorted us – corporal and spiritual works of mercy!

God's blessings,

+Edward B. Scharfberger

+Bishop Ed