



September 8-9, 2018

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write to you today out of deep concern for our Church and for you, the people of the Archdiocese of Seattle. In recent months, the Church in the United States has been profoundly shaken by the news of Archbishop McCarrick, the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report, and the message of Archbishop Viganò, former papal nuncio to the United States. One could not help but be upset, angry and confused by these things. Today I would like to offer some words of pastoral love and care for all of you.

First and foremost, I want to say again how deeply sorry I am to those of you who have experienced sexual abuse by a member of the clergy or anyone acting in the name of the Church. The Church should have been the one place where you knew you would always be safe, and tragically, some people found the opposite to be true. As your Archbishop, I apologize to you for the pain inflicted on you and the suffering you may continue to experience. I am filled with remorse and deep sadness for the tragic way that we bishops let you down and ask for the Lord's forgiveness and for yours.

To all of you, the faithful of the Archdiocese, I also apologize for the effect the current scandals are having on your faith, your trust in us bishops and the Church, and your peace of mind. I can only imagine the outrage and embarrassment you must feel as a result of the recent revelations. We let you down, too, and I offer you my heartfelt word that we will make clear efforts at reparation and repair. Part of those efforts will include a special reparation and healing service scheduled for early October in St. James Cathedral. More details will be shared very soon on this important gathering.

Perhaps you have read that Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has requested a meeting with Pope Francis for himself and the Conference's Executive Committee. Likewise, the leadership of the Conference is working on proposals that will be discussed by the entire body of bishops at our annual November meeting. The bishops recognize that this is a moment that cannot be squandered, and that it is a time to act for the healing and credibility of the Church in the name of Christ. The bishops also know that such action must include deeper involvement of the laity. I'm sure there will be more information to share with you in the months to come.

When I first felt called to the priesthood as a young boy, it was because I wanted to be holy and bring others to Jesus in every way the Church does so. Those remain my goals, and they have become even more intense over my 40 years of priestly ministry. I know the same is true for the priests who serve in the Archdiocese of Seattle. We want to draw closer

to Christ Jesus as priests and, together, with all of you. We want to be holy men, who live lives of integrity and faithfulness to our priestly promises and the Church herself. And we want to serve you as you deserve to be served, as God's beloved people redeemed by the blood of his Son.

All of us together must cling to Christ. In the midst of these very troubling scandals, he calls us to come even closer to himself, to allow him to feed us with his Word and Sacrament, and to pray for the purification and healing of the Church. You can count on my prayers and those of every priest, and we ask for yours.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Peter Sartain". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

J. Peter Sartain
Archbishop of Seattle

To report any suspicion of abuse by any Church personnel, please contact local law enforcement. In addition, anyone who has knowledge of sexual abuse or misconduct by a member of the clergy, an employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese of Seattle is urged to call the archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.