

PROMISE TO
PROTECT

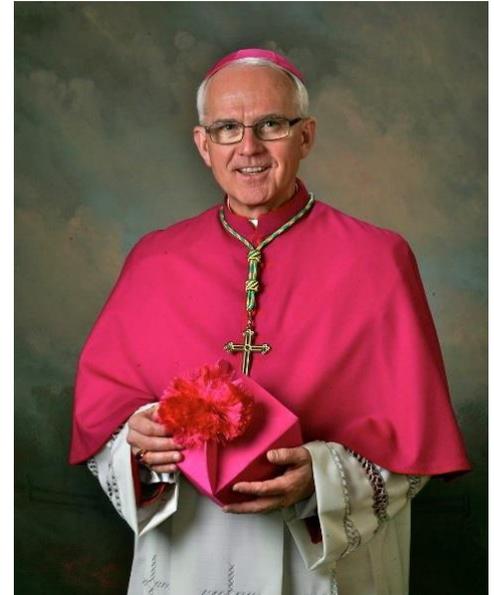


PLEDGE TO
HEAL

Dear Friends in Christ:

The Diocese of Ogdensburg continues our efforts to create a climate of safety for all the youth entrusted to our pastoral care. We remain committed to fulfilling our pledge: to promote healing and reconciliation with victims/survivors of sexual abuse; to guarantee an effective response to allegations of sexual abuse; to implement procedures that protect the faithful in the future; and to hold accountable those who have harmed our children.

The Church offers immediate and ongoing pastoral care to those who have suffered such abuse. I encourage these individuals to contact our Victims' Assistance Coordinator, Ms. Terrianne Yanulavich at 518-651-2267 (days) or 518-569-0612 evenings; terrianneyanulavich@citizensadvocates.net to report such abuse and for assistance with the healing process. We are deeply sorry for any past failures in addressing properly the sinful acts that have been perpetrated against our youth by Church leaders.



Because We Care deeply for the vulnerable among us, the Church of Ogdensburg continues to review our policies and explore ways to ensure that our children are protected from all who would harm them. Under the direction of John Morrison, the Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator & Charter Compliance Coordinator, we are diligently working to ensure that the national and diocesan policies established to provide safe environments for our children are implemented fully here in the North Country. With the strong support and cooperation of our pastors and pastoral staff, we have taken seriously this important responsibility.

Since 2003, independent audits have been conducted in the Diocese of Ogdensburg to determine compliance with the national and diocesan policies. Every year, the Diocese has been found to be compliant. This year, we are preparing for another Diocesan on-site audit to be conducted by the *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*. We welcome the shared responsibility we have of protecting God's children and offer our transparency and accountability in this mission.

I am grateful to all those individuals who assist with the implementation of our safe environment programs in our diocese. Certified facilitators provide VIRTUS training throughout our parishes, communities, and schools to teach adults on how to provide safe environments for our children and youth. Continued cooperation and prayer help us all keep the promise to protect and the pledge to heal. As Jesus, the Good Shepherd, showed constant care for the vulnerable, your local Church, working with our parents and staff, is seeking to do likewise.

With a Shepherd's care and concern,

Handwritten signature of Terry R. LaValley.

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg