

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

December 4, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I wanted to reach out personally and first thank you for your support and prayers in these difficult times for our Church and our Diocese in particular. I know there is a lot of confusion, sadness, and upset about clergy sexual abuse, past and present, as well as about information being shared in the news about clergy in our Diocese. I am sorry that we are all going through this, and I am praying for all of you. I hope you also pray for me, our clergy, as well as the dedicated staff throughout our diocese. As a way to be open about how we are moving forward currently, I wanted to share with you the action steps we are taking at this time.

1. Our Diocesan Review Board, made up of lay people from the Diocese, has met twice in the last month and will again in two weeks, as they continue to work on the list of credibly accused priests that will be released to the public.
2. Each of the four Bishops of Iowa requested a meeting with the State Attorney General. All have meetings scheduled. Our meeting is December 6.
3. We are reviewing, with our Priests' Pension Board, how we handle the policy of priests receiving pension benefits.
4. We respond to emails, calls, and messages from those who contact us with questions/concerns.
5. We continue to meet with victims and review all cases with our Review Board, and they advise the Bishop on how to move forward with each case.
6. We continue to have a policy of zero tolerance. If sexual abuse by a priest is substantiated, he will no longer function as a priest. If appropriate, we will work to have him laicized, submitting all necessary paperwork to the Vatican for review.
7. We ask that anyone who suspects sexual abuse by a member of the clergy to call law enforcement, and call Angie Mack, Victims Assistance Coordinator at Mercy Child Advocacy Center: 712-279-5610 or toll free at 1-866-435-4397. They help both victims who are minors and those who are adults and were victimized in their childhood by a member of the clergy.

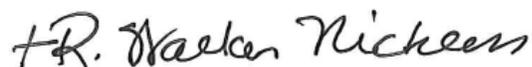
DIocese of SIoux CITY

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I hope this letter answers some of your questions about what steps we are taking to move forward. If you would like more information, you can contact the Diocese and we will try to get in touch with you as soon as we can.

With the season of Advent upon us, we are provided a time to prepare for the Lord's coming and remember the reason we are Catholic and believe in our Church. May this time bring you peace and hope.

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Walker Nickless". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Most Reverend R. Walker Nickless
Bishop of Sioux City