

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are walking together through a most difficult time for our Church. The pain and sadness of the effects of past sins and crimes against vulnerable children by certain members of our clergy have been with us for some time. Those who were harmed as innocent children by these vicious crimes experienced not only the physical, psychological and emotional damage imposed on them by ministers of a Church they trusted. These childhood victims also experienced the profound betrayal of faith that Jesus knew too well in his life on earth. In his Passion he was betrayed by his own, abandoned, and left to suffer and die, for sins he did not commit nor could he have ever committed.

Jesus is risen now and present among us, to reconcile the world to the Father. He is here for those who have been harmed, for the victims and for all of us who pray and work for healing for them and for our Church. I and our Diocese stand in union with those who have suffered and seek justice and accountability.

There was at least one person who never abandoned Jesus. Nor will our Blessed Mother ever abandon the lost and forsaken, nor our Church. To this end, I invite you to join us: Our Lady, Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, me your Bishop, the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, local clergy, religious and lay people, people of all faith traditions, to a Solemn Prayer Service with Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament for Atonement and Healing. This service will be held on the Memorial of Saint Monica, patron saint of mothers, wives, and abuse victims on Tuesday, August 27 at 6:30, at the Shrine of Saint Thérèse, Pueblo.

Please join us for this prayerful and penitential liturgy as we call on the Lord to heal those who have been harmed in the past, and that these crimes never be allowed to happen again.

In Jesus through Mary,

Bishop Stephen J. Berg