



*Diocese of Fall River*  
*Office of the Bishop*  
*Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.*

January 3, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we begin this New Year, I write to inform you of recent, important steps taken in the Fall River Diocese in our ongoing efforts to foster healing in the wake of the clergy sexual abuse crisis and to provide greater transparency in our response to it.

Last fall an internal review and reorganization of all priestly personnel files in the Diocese was done to ensure all documents were assembled together and in proper order. With input from advisors, I then determined that, in the interest of accountability and transparency, the services of an outside independent consultant were needed for a comprehensive evaluation of these files with regard to abuse. I am pleased to inform you that Mr. William Gavin, an experienced compliance auditor and former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Assistant Director, has recently begun an in-depth review of all records of the Diocese pertaining to the abuse or allegations of abuse of a minor by any cleric in the Diocese. Mr. Gavin brings much experience and expertise in this work having completed numerous similar reviews for other dioceses. It is anticipated that this review will be completed in the spring.

Upon its completion, the Fall River Diocese will publish a list of clergy against whom a credible allegation of abuse of a minor has been made in the past. While most of these names have already been reported in the media, the publication of a list is necessary for greater transparency on our part in response to clerical sexual abuse. I wish that this information could be made available sooner; yet it takes time and diligence to compile a list that is accurate and complete.

Also in the year ahead, efforts will continue to strengthen diocesan abuse prevention protocols through the work of our reorganized and expanded Office of Safe Environment to help ensure the protection of our youth and vulnerable adults.

It is my fervent prayer that this New Year will be one marked by recovery and healing both here in our Diocese and in the Church worldwide.

Please know that you have my prayerful best wishes for a healthy and happy 2019.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.  
Bishop of Fall River