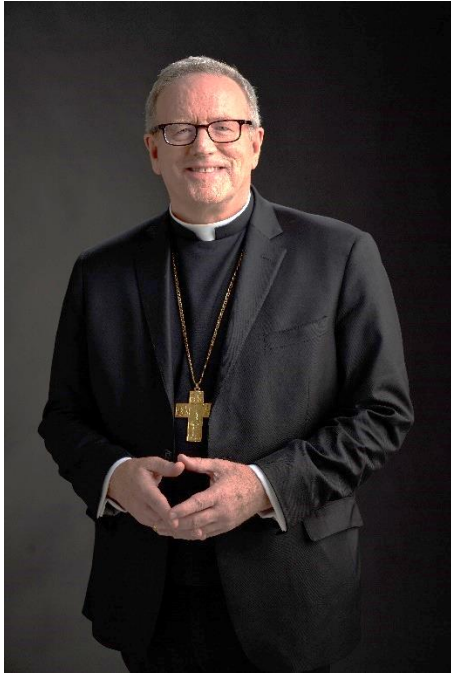


A Statement from Bishop Barron



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as perhaps you know, April has been designated in our country as child abuse awareness month. The sexual and physical abuse of children is a problem that runs through the whole of our society, but as we all know it has been a particular curse within our own Catholic community. The scandals associated with clerical sexual misconduct constitute the worst crisis in the history of the church in America. I have referred to the sex abuse of young people by priest and bishops as “the devil’s masterpiece,” for it has shattered so many lives and has so negatively impacted the evangelical mission of the Church.

I want all of you to know, as your bishop, that I am completely committed to the eradication of sexual abuse within the church and the protection of our children and vulnerable adults. Bishop Quinn was firm in his determination to implement in our diocese the strictest protocols in regard to the screening and monitoring of seminarians, priests, and anyone who works in and for the Church. I pledge to walk the same path.

Some years ago, I wrote a short book on this entire sad subject called *Letter to a Suffering Church*. This text is available online, free of charge, at sufferingchurchbook.com. I would encourage everyone in our diocese to download and read it. Finally, don’t hesitate to come forward if you or a loved one has been abused by a minister associated with the Church. I assure you that your concern will be taken with utter seriousness.

Please, dear friends in Christ, continue to pray for all the victim/survivors of sexual abuse throughout our society. And pray, too, for our Church.

Bishop Robert Barron
Bishop of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester