



# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SPOKANE

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## Office of the Bishop

November 15, 2018

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you may know, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops gathered this week in Baltimore for our annual fall assembly. Our intended agenda was to deal with the ongoing sex abuse crisis in our Church. Along with many of my brother bishops, I was surprised and disappointed to learn that the Holy See had instructed the USCCB not to hold binding votes on the proposed “Code of Conduct for Bishops” or the proposal to create a lay commission to investigate claims against bishops.

As a member of the US Bishop’s Committee for Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations I helped review and edit the proposed “Code of Conduct for Bishops.” This document is an important step towards renewal and a real commitment by us, your bishops, to act with utmost integrity.

The instruction not to vote on the two proposals could be interpreted as a lack of care and concern for victims and their families. From the comments of many of the faithful of Eastern Washington and beyond, the lay people expect us to act. We must pray that Pope Francis and the Curia understand how the Church's ability to proclaim the Gospel and teach the Faith will be damaged, perhaps beyond repair in our lifetime, if we do not act.

As a body, the US Bishops must insist not only on accountability for bishops but also for religious superiors and provincials. They too need to be held accountable for any harassment or predatory behavior towards seminarians and professed religious men and women.

Please pray for Pope Francis, my brother bishops, and me that we may make progress on bringing about the reforms so desperately needed.

In Christ,

Bishop Thomas Daly