



Office of the Bishop  
*Diocese of Camden*

January 5, 2021

My brother Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Women and Men, Dear Parishioners, and People of South Jersey:

As 2021 begins, I am hopeful that the many challenges of 2020 are behind us. The resilience of our parishes, schools, parishioners and the greater South Jersey community has been very evident throughout 2020 and, please God, will continue in the New Year. The trials of 2020 allowed us to rediscover the value of community, even if it was virtually or socially distanced. I look forward to a brighter 2021. On October 1, 2020 the Diocese filed for Chapter 11 reorganization and I want to provide you with an update on this process.

On December 31, 2020, the Diocese filed its Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization and a detailed Disclosure Statement pursuant to Title 11 of the United States Code. The Bankruptcy Court has scheduled a hearing on February 10, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. to consider the adequacy of the Disclosure Statement which is the next step toward reorganizing and responding to the survivors of clerical abuse and the claims of other creditors. Upon approval of the Disclosure Statement, the Diocese will solicit the votes of our creditors, including the survivors of abuse, in order to successfully emerge from the reorganization process.

Beginning this past November, the Diocese and the Tort Claimants' Committee engaged in mediation before the Honorable Michael B. Kaplan, Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Jersey. Chief Judge Kaplan has held numerous mediation sessions. On December 4, 2020, Chief Judge Kaplan conducted an in-person mediation session at the Church of the Holy Family, Aquin Center in Sewell, New Jersey. I attended this in-person mediation, which lasted approximately 8 hours.

In addition to the mediation sessions, the Diocese has repeatedly offered either a virtual or in person meeting with all members of the Committee to discuss the needs of the survivors and any programs they might recommend. It is my hope that such a meeting will occur early in the New Year. However, so far, the Committee has declined our requests.

The goal of this reorganization for the Diocese has been and is to treat all the creditors of the diocese, including the survivors of abuse, fairly and equitably in as expeditious a manner as possible. The Diocese is hopeful that it can emerge from reorganization swiftly so that it can continue its much-needed mission in South Jersey.

Especially in the current pandemic, the Diocese has an obligation to the Catholic faithful we serve and the greater community we support to continue the ministries and critical safety net programs of the Church. Now, more than ever, the continued presence of the Diocese, our parishes, schools and charitable agencies are of supreme importance for so many in our South Jersey community.

With prayers for God's blessings for each of you throughout this New Year, I am,

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan, D.D.  
Bishop of Camden