



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

A DAY OF PENANCE BY PRIESTS IN UNION WITH THE BISHOP

September 14, 2018

Feast of The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

In his letter addressed to the faithful on August 20, 2018, Bishop Matano addressed the very disturbing and tragic situation revealed by the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report detailing clerical sexual abuse of minors, further worsened by the reports concerning Archbishop Theodore McCarrick. In that same letter, the Bishop quoted these words of Pope Francis in his Letter to the People of God inviting the faithful: "To see things as the Lord does, to be where the Lord wants us to be, to experience a conversion of heart in His presence. To do so, prayer, and penance will help. I invite the entire holy faithful People of God to a penitential exercise of prayer and fasting, following the Lord's command."

In response to the invitation of Pope Francis, Bishop Matano has asked that all priests in the Diocese of Rochester join with him in observing September 14, 2018, the *Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross*, as a day of penance by the priests in our Diocese in union with the Bishop. The Bishop stated: "I ask that as we offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on that day, we plead the Lord's mercy for the grave offences committed and remember especially the innocent victims of clergy sexual abuse, the faith of our people, the purification of the Church and the renewal of the clergy. On this day and in all the days that follow, we must ask the Lord to grant us healing, reconciliation and conversion of heart. I ask that you extend an invitation to the faithful to attend these Masses, as we unite the sufferings of the victims, Church and all God's people to the one perfect sacrifice of Calvary, where the heart of Christ visibly embraced humanity."

In addition, parishes have been encouraged to provide opportunities for adoration of Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament, making available the consolation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or praying other devotions such as the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and the Stations of the Cross, as determined by local circumstances.

Finally, the Bishop asked that the priests remember each other in prayer, that the Lord strengthen their resolve to serve God's people faithfully so that their priestly ministry may help heal His people, restore their trust and they be uplifted "by our own personal examples of priestly commitment."