



THE  
CHURCH  
OF

# SAINT GREGORY

*Forward in Faith*

September 17, 2018

Dear Friend(s),

This week our parish comes alive after the break of summer in the hope of new beginnings in God's generous love. The past year was marked by an incredible amount of work and support for the capital campaign and Ministry Center plans. I am most grateful to each and every one of you.

As we begin to watch the foundation of the new Center rise out of the ground, I hope we can hold each other up and move through this troubled time in the life of the Church. Father Maher of Scranton Prep writes in a recent letter, "the suffering inflicted on so many victims is a scandalous wound that, frankly, cannot be fully healed in this life: not for the victims – the depth of whose suffering is known only to God – indeed for anyone in the Church." I could not agree more. I am sorry for the suffering and betrayal.

I believe this is a dark night of the soul. Like every dark night it's meant to stretch the heart. This is always painful and our normal impulse is to do something to end the pain. But it won't go away until we learn what it's meant to teach us starting with a new humility among all deacons, priests and bishops.

How do we go on? By reaffirming what is at the heart of *Catholicism* - to encounter Christ both suffering and raised. This experience – a saving experience – happens when we gather for Eucharist on Sunday celebrating the sacramental life of the Church. God only desires to feed our deepest hungers and heal our deepest wounds with the body and blood of His Son. We dare not look away because we are the Sacrament through which God continues to work in the world – a Sacrament whose reality cannot be effaced even by the most scurrilous behavior of its members.

I pray that you always find in me first and foremost a "kindness" that will encourage everyone to feel at home and make Christ's living presence felt even more in this special community. How blessed I am to have the opportunity to work with you to advance our mission that is needed now more than ever.

I have much more listening to do and will invite our family to experiences of prayer, reflection and support in months ahead. For whenever we make the effort to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, doors open wide with new signs and words with meaning for today's world.

Join me and your parish family this weekend for a fresh and vibrant start as the Church of Saint Gregory, *Built of Living Stones*.

Peace,

