



November 7, 2018

My Dear People of God:

The USCCB – United States Catholic Conference of Bishops – will be convening November 11-15, 2018 for their annual General Assembly in Baltimore. Top priority will be the discussion of episcopal accountability. The U.S. Bishops will be making critical decisions in response to this current crisis. Actions that have already begun by the U.S. Bishops include:

- A lay commission of independent law enforcement and social service experts to pursue all allegations of sexual abuse against Bishops or their handling of such cases
- Standards of Episcopal Conduct with protocols for Bishops removed or who have resigned due to allegations or the mishandling of cases
- Third Party reporting systems to ensure thorough and impartial methods of reporting. We cannot be complacent and our policies must reflect the highest possible standard of accountability.

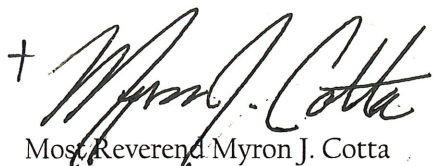
With my brother Bishops across the nation, we have been praying and fasting in preparation for the work ahead. The intentions for this period of prayers and sacrifice are three-fold:

- For the healing and support of all survivors of clergy sexual abuse
- For the conversion and just punishment of the perpetrators and concealers of sexual abuse
- For the strength of the Bishops to be bold shepherds in protecting and leading our sheep from all harm

If you feel called to do so, you are welcome to pray for these intentions. I would also be grateful for prayers for me and my brother Bishops during our General Assembly, that we may follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our response to this tragedy.

Please be assured of my prayers for you, as well.

In the Peace of Christ,

+ 

Most Reverend Myron J. Cotta  
Roman Catholic Bishop of Stockton