



Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Brooklyn

310 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, New York 11215

January 23/24, 2021

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I have asked Father West to read this letter on my behalf at the close of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is with profound regret that I must advise you that this letter contains information that will trouble you as members of the faith community of Saint Sebastian. You are undoubtedly aware of the deep suffering and hurt that surround any instance of inappropriate behavior, especially when allegations involve a member of the clergy. It can damage, often irreparably, the innocence, the trust and the reputations of all who are in any way affected by it.

Unfortunately, I write to you about such incidents involving Deacon Rogelio Vega of St. Sebastian. As many of you may know, on Friday, January 22, 2021 we were informed that Rogelio Vega was arrested as part of a police sting operation, on allegations that he attempted to have sex with a minor after contact on social media. In keeping with our Diocesan Policy and the 2002 Bishops Charter and Norms for the Protection of Children and Youth, he has been immediately removed from all diaconal ministry.

I am aware that this news has been devastating to many. With this in my mind, the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Jasmine Salazar, LMSW is arranging to make virtual and telephone meetings available for different groups in your parish, to provide you with pastoral care, information and clarification where needed. Often just having a place to speak about such matters are the beginning steps to addressing the strong impact such news can have.

Once again, I encourage each of us in our resolve to protect our children and youth from all forms of abuse. I invite anyone who is the victim of sexual abuse by a member of the clergy to inform the Diocese. To facilitate making such a call, I have established the toll-free number of 888-634-4499. A specially trained and caring layperson, who is not affiliated in any way with the Diocese, will treat you with courtesy and respect. This number will be published in the bulletin and also appears on the posters in the back of the Church.

With an assurance of my continued remembrance of you in prayer, and asking for your prayers for all victims and survivors of abuse, I am,

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Nicholas DiMarzio, Ph.D., D.D.
Bishop of Brooklyn