



**Statement to the Clergy, Consecrated and Lay of the Diocese  
From the Most Reverend Paul J. Swain  
Bishop of Sioux Falls  
December 20, 2018**

*On December 19 there was a fire in the worship space of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Sioux Falls. No one was injured. Law enforcement is investigating the cause.*

It is with great sadness that I learned of the fire at Our Lady of Guadalupe church, one of the oldest Catholic church buildings in Sioux Falls. This is especially sad as we approach the joyful season of Christmas.

This morning I visited the site to see for myself the degree of destruction. While we await the advice of experts as to the extent of the destruction, early assessments are that the structure remains sound. Therefore I wish to assure the faithful of the parish which serves the growing Hispanic community in our city and diocese that it is my intention to do whatever is required to restore the church as a house of worship.

I ask for prayers for the pastor Father Kristopher Cowles and all parishioners who grieve the temporary loss of their spiritual home.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe console and watch over us all.