

PRESS RELEASE

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Los Angeles, CA

Archdiocese of Los Angeles Sexual Abuse Settlement

For Immediate Release

Today, counsel for more than 508 of victims of childhood sexual abuse announced an historic settlement resolving all claims arising from sexual abuse by clergy and other employees of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the religious orders that operate within its jurisdiction. Our firms have had the privilege and honor of representing 109 of these brave individuals.

The financial terms of the settlement are historic, totaling \$660 million dollars. While this compensation is remarkable, no amount of money could adequately compensate these victims for the horrors they endured as children and the shattered lives many have led until now. Unfortunately, many survivors felt re-victimized by the litigation process leading up to this settlement.

Notwithstanding the Archdiocese's new found willingness to compromise on the eve of the first of dozens of scheduled trials, this process has been grueling both for the victims, their families and their attorneys. Since the beginning of this litigation, more than four years ago, the Archdiocese's strategy was designed to deny, diminish, or delay justice for these victims. We are proud to represent these survivors, who have shown remarkable strength, courage, and determination throughout this needlessly contentious ordeal.

Fear of the truth being revealed should never be a justification for putting a child in harms way. Children are society's most precious asset. They are the world's future. No amount of money can replace the joy and wonderment of childhood or adolescence. This settlement brought the parties to the brink of personal and organizational crisis. The parties choose a path of resolution as opposed to continued conflict. While the memories of abuse will linger, the status of the survivors as victims of sexual predators will never be in doubt.

While the financial terms of the settlement are historic, the documents associated with the tenure, assignment and transfer of the perpetrators were paramount to the survivors. Those documents have been turned over by the Archdiocese to the Court for further disposition. The survivors and their counsel will motion the Court forthwith to release all documents formerly held by the Archdiocese to the public consistent with due process to those who may be affected by the release of their contents. This critical term of settlement between the Archdiocese and the survivors is an attempt to bring much needed

light to the flawed, and often tragic decision-making process that permitted perpetrators unfettered access to children

This concession in itself is remarkable, especially considering that two years ago the Archdiocese was willing to defend its secrets before the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to hear the case.

We wish to thank all those who worked tirelessly to bring this settlement to fruition. Some individuals, however, deserve special mention. Throughout four long years of mediation and mandatory settlement conferences, the parties were assisted by Judges Charles W. McCoy and Peter D. Lichtman. They conducted their mediations and settlement conferences with a level of unparalleled fairness and compassion. Their tenacity and commitment to the process in the face of overwhelming obstacles was the sole reason the parties came together. A litigant cannot ask for any greater service by the Courts.

Oscar Wilde once said that the truth is rarely pure and never simple. Childhood sexual abuse is an insidious assault on the victim and their family, becoming a daily reminder of loss and despair. It is our great hope that by courageously exposing the previously unspeakable -- the truth -- these survivors will now have the freedom to find some measure of peace.

As for the future, it is now time for the Church to step forward and reconcile with all of the People of God.

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