



May 14, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

For more than two decades now in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, we have been working together to promote healing and make amends for the terrible harm suffered by victim-survivors of abuse by members of the Church.

Again, I want to express my sorrow for this abuse and to apologize to everyone who has suffered. We will remain vigilant in our efforts to protect children, report abuse and reach out to support victim-survivors.

And that is why today, we are joining with five other dioceses in California in a new initiative to provide pastoral care and financial support to any person who has been sexually abused as a minor by a diocesan priest.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles, along with Dioceses of Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, Fresno and Sacramento, has been working for the past seven months with Kenneth R. Feinberg and Camille S. Biros, respected mediators and compensation program administrators, to establish this new program.

The Independent Compensation Program for Victim-Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests (ICP) in California, is similar to other programs established by Mr. Feinberg and Ms. Biros in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Colorado. Those programs have already assisted hundreds of victim-survivors directly.

We have been providing pastoral care and financial support for victim-survivors here in the Archdiocese for many years. We will continue to do so. But we also understand that some victim-survivors are reluctant to come to the Church for assistance. Our hope with this new program is to give these people a chance to seek redress and healing through an independent program.

Mr. Feinberg and Ms. Biros will have complete administrative control over the ICP. In addition, the program is overseen by an independent board that includes former Governor Gray Davis and business leader and former Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, Maria Contreras-Sweet.

You can find documents from the California Catholic Conference with more information regarding the program at this link: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/california-catholic-dioceses-announce-new-compensation-program-for-abuse-victims-300849889.html>. Program coordinators have been working with each of the participating dioceses for several months and will be announcing the start of the program in the coming weeks.

I am grateful to all who have joined in our Archdiocesan abuse prevention and protection efforts, especially our many lay staff and volunteers in our Safeguard the Children programs and Victims Assistance Ministry who have worked tirelessly to make our parishes, schools and ministry safer. May God bless you as you continue this vital work.

Please join me in continuing to pray for all those who have suffered abuse. And let us continue to work together so that abuse is prevented and children are protected in our parishes, schools and ministries.

Again, I apologize to the victims of priest sexual abuse and express my deep sorrow and regret for our past failures and the trust that was broken. I realize, as you do, that no program, however well-intentioned and well-designed, can repair the damage done to victims and their families. But I pray that this new program might provide another avenue toward healing and hope.

May we find hope in Jesus Christ, may the Blessed Virgin Mary be a mother to us all, and may God grant us peace,

Most Reverend José H. Gomez
Archbishop of Los Angeles