



Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Office of
The Archbishop

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My dear brothers and sisters,

The Catholic Church has confronted the issue of child sexual abuse for more than two decades now. It is a legacy of shame for all of us in the Church, and we are aware that nothing can undo the harm done to victim-survivors or restore the innocence and trust that was taken from them.

But this has also been a time of reform. Out of our past failures, the Church has made important reforms and put in place effective systems to support victims and protect children.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles created this [web portal](#) as part of our ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability. On this site, you can learn about the Archdiocese's efforts to prevent abuse and to support victim-survivors. You can also learn about our protocols for reporting and investigating suspected abuse by those serving in the Archdiocese and for removing offenders from ministry.

Allegations of abuse involving minors, whether by a member of the clergy or a layperson, are reported to law enforcement and public announcements are made at the places where the person has served. The accused is removed from ministry while the matter is investigated. If the allegation involves a member of the clergy, it is also reviewed by an oversight board that includes lay professionals and a victim-survivor. If the allegation is found to be credible, the accused is permanently removed from any capacity according to the Archdiocese's "zero tolerance" policy.

As I expressed to you when we released the 2018 update of our "[Report to the People of God](#)," we have also established an extensive program of education and background checks to make sure our children are safe and cared for in our parishes, schools and ministries. It is because of the hard work and dedication of our [Safeguard the Children Program](#) staff, and the hundreds of thousands of employees, volunteers, clergy and lay faithful who have participated in the program, new cases of abuse are [rare](#) today in the Church in Los Angeles. We remain vigilant in our commitment to protect children and report allegations and remove perpetrators from ministry.

Through our Office of [Victims Assistance Ministry](#), we continue to provide pastoral care and financial support to help victim-survivors find healing, justice, and hope. We also understand that some victim-survivors are reluctant to come to the Church for assistance and that many will

never take their claims to court. For this reason, the Archdiocese in 2019 joined in a [private independent program](#) to provide compensation to any person who has been sexually abused as a minor by a diocesan priest; we also initiated an additional program for those abused as a minor by a religious order or extern priest serving in the Archdiocese, no matter when that abuse occurred.

As with the previous opening of the statute of limitations in 2003, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles is cooperating with the new opening of the statute of limitations under Assembly Bill 218 that began January 1, 2020. It is our hope that all victim-survivors of childhood sexual abuse in all institutional settings will be able to have their pain and suffering addressed and resolved, and we pray that AB 218 will be a step forward in that direction.

Again, I want to apologize to all victims of sexual abuse and express my deep sorrow 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 together, through our continued efforts, we can help and support victim-survivors find healing and hope.

May we all 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