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**Archdiocese of Los Angeles**

Office of  
the Archbishop

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September 10, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In May, I joined my brother bishops from the Dioceses of Fresno, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego and Sacramento in announcing a new independent compensation program that will be available to any person who has been sexually abused as a minor by diocesan priests of the participating dioceses, no matter when that abuse might have occurred.

Effective September 16, 2019, the **Independent Compensation Program by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Diocese of Fresno, Diocese of Orange, Diocese of Sacramento, Diocese of San Bernardino, and Diocese of San Diego for Victim-Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests (ICP)** will begin to accept registrations from victim-survivors.

The ICP is entirely independent from the Church. Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, widely recognized as the premier dispute resolution administrators in the country, will administer the ICP. An independent oversight committee, consisting of former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Governor Gray Davis (ret.), and Hon. Maria Contreras-Sweet (former Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing in California, and former Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration) will oversee the administration of the ICP.

This new program is similar to programs administered by Mr. Feinberg and Ms. Biros in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Colorado. Those programs have already assisted hundreds of victim-survivors directly.

Funding for the program in our Archdiocese will come from our self-insured reserves. No program funding will come from donations to our *Together in Mission* annual appeal, *Called to Renew* campaign or donor-designated gifts.

We urge you to learn more about this important program by visiting the ICP's website, [www.californiadiocesesicp.com](http://www.californiadiocesesicp.com). This site will be operational on September 16, 2019, the official start date for the program.

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 those who prefer to participate in an independent program a chance to seek redress and healing.

The Catholic dioceses of California have put in place strict policies and programs to protect young people and to create safe environments in parishes, schools and other ministries. Hundreds of thousands of adults throughout the state have been trained in abuse prevention and reporting. Hundreds of thousands more in leadership positions have been fingerprinted or undergone other forms of background checks. Dioceses have implemented strict reporting requirements, working closely with local law enforcement officials to immediately report abuse allegations and remove accused perpetrators from ministry.

As a result, new cases of sexual misconduct by priests involving minors are rare today in the Catholic Church in California. Nonetheless, my brother bishops and I undertake this new program as another step in our continued efforts to provide avenues for victim-survivors of abuse to receive assistance to continue their healing.

Please join me in continuing to pray for all those who have suffered abuse. Our Office of Victims Assistance Ministry (VAM) has created a prayer card utilizing the insight of a victim-survivor on how to best reach those impacted by such abuse. This prayer card is already available at our parishes and for downloading here: [archla.org/support](http://archla.org/support). We pray this will be a good resource in promoting healing for victim-survivors.

The damage done to innocent young people and their families by sexual abuse in the past is profound. Again, I want to apologize to all 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