

February 26, 2023

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

In the March/April issue of *Catholic Herald* magazine, you will read about the ongoing efforts of the Diocese of Sacramento to protect the young and vulnerable, to create truly safe spaces for all God's People, and to atone for the devastating sin of clergy sexual abuse. All of these are lifetime endeavors; a key part of who we are as a Church for all time.

A vital aspect of owning and atoning for the sins of the past is resolving claims brought forward by victim-survivors in a fair and responsible manner. I have committed to this principle and attempt to live it in every case.

This year, there is a very important development I must share with you.

More than 200 lawsuits alleging sexual abuse of minors have been filed against the diocese as a result of a state law extending the statute of limitations for such cases.

To learn of this staggering number of claims is truly heartbreaking. These claims represent real people whose lives have been damaged by the sins of individuals whom they had been taught to trust. I apologize deeply for these sins and for the harm they have caused.

The civil claims received by the Diocese of Sacramento, along with claims made against other dioceses in northern California, are being managed in a special proceeding overseen by a judge of the Alameda County Court. The Court has begun early discussions with an eye toward the establishment of a workable claims resolution process. We and the other parties are in close communication and cooperation with the Court in this regard, but we are still very early in the process.

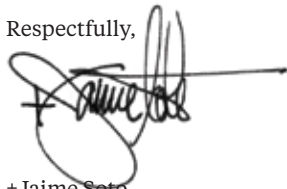
I am committed to resolving all claims as fairly as possible. Given the number of claims that have been presented, however, resolving them may overwhelm the diocese's finances available to satisfy such claims.

This financial challenge is unlike anything we have faced before. I must consider what options are available to us, should the diocese become insolvent.

I regret that this information will be a source of disappointment and anxiety for the Faithful. Although there is much that we do not yet know about the process for resolving these claims, I hope we will be able to answer at least some of the initial questions you may have. The diocesan staff has prepared a question-and-answer article addressing the considerations before us. At this time, there are many questions that can't be answered. I will, however, add to this discussion as we move forward.

Above all, I ask you to remain with me in prayer for the victims of sexual abuse. Remember at all times that the situation we face is due to the sins of our Church, not to victim-survivors seeking justice and healing. The relentlessness of the pain and suffering of these victims must be matched by the relentlessness of our prayers for their healing and by our efforts to never again allow these sins of sexual abuse to occur in the Church.

Respectfully,



+Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento



**To access the frequently asked questions article and for updates,
please access our website: <https://www.scd.org/clergyabuse/ab218-faq>**

