



**ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE**

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

September 13, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In May, together with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the Dioceses of Fresno, San Bernardino, San Diego and Sacramento, the Diocese of Orange announced a new compensation program that will be available to any person who was sexually abused as a minor by diocesan priests of the participating dioceses, no matter when that abuse might have occurred. While new cases of sexual misconduct by priests involving minors are rare today in the Catholic Church in California, the Bishops undertake this program as another step in their continued efforts to provide avenues for victim-survivors of abuse to receive assistance for continued healing.

Effective September 16, 2019, the California Independent Compensation Program for Victim-Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests (ICP) will begin to accept registrations from victims at its website: www.CaliforniaDiocesesICP.com. We urge you to learn more about this important program by going directly to this website.

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 program. An independent oversight committee, consisting of former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Gov. 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.

The new independent program is an important initiative in the California bishops' continuing commitment to provide pastoral care and financial support to victim-survivors of sexual abuse of minors by priests. In the past two decades, Catholic dioceses in California have worked to provide assistance to abuse victim-survivors, offering counseling and other support, to victim-survivors in an effort to acknowledge responsibility for the grave offenses committed by priests and to compensate victims for their pain and suffering which often dates back several decades.

Catholic dioceses have also put in place strict policies and programs to protect 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 and undergone 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. The Diocese of Orange was one of the first Dioceses to put all of these in place.

The damage done to innocent young people and their families by sexual abuse in the past is profound. It cannot be erased by apologies, no matter how sincere. Money cannot buy back a wounded person's wholeness. But what compensation can do is acknowledge the evil that was done, and help survivors on their journey to recover their dignity and peace.

In the days ahead, you will hear more about this program in the media from Mr. Feinberg and the Independent Oversight Review Committee.

This program is just one of the many ways the Diocese of Orange is reaffirming its commitment to justice and healing for victims. To find out more, visit <https://justice.rcbo.org> or <https://safe.rcbo.org>. Again, for direct access to the ICP, visit www.CaliforniaDiocesesICP.com on or after Sept 16.

With gratitude for your continued support and prayers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin W. Vann".

Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, J.C.D., D.D.
Bishop of Orange in California