



To: Pastors and Parishes:

On January 1, a new law went into effect that reopened the statute of limitations on claims and lawsuits involving the sexual abuse of minors. It affects all public and private organizations in California, with the exception of state government. The window will remain open for 3 years. This is the second time the window has been opened. It previously took place in 2003, with the diocese settling all outstanding lawsuits in 2007.

As a result, we expect our diocese and all dioceses in the state will face additional lawsuits.

In a news conference this morning, local attorney Irwin Zalkin announced his intention to file as many as 60 additional lawsuits against half a dozen priests who served here. Three were priests of our diocese. Two were members of religious orders and one was a visiting priest who briefly served here in the early 1960's, but about whom we received no complaints.

A copy of the statement we released today is attached.

Some parishes may see a visit from a local news crew. They won't be there to conduct interviews, but they will be there to shoot outside video as part of preparing their story for tonight's news. They are allowed to shoot video from the sidewalk and other public venues, but some may briefly park in the parish lot. The best thing to do is leave them alone and let them do their jobs. Call Aida Bustos or me if they insist on conducting an interview and we'll follow-up, but do not conduct an interview. Our written statement is all we have to say on the record.

In coming weeks, expect to see additional announcements from attorneys announcing lawsuits and additional news crews seeking video. Like today, we will probably not know in advance where cameras will show up, but our advice will always be the same. Please don't engage them unless they come to you and let us know when they show up. We'll have statements available from the Pastoral Center.

Thank you for your help.

Kevin Eckery
Vice Chancellor of Communications and Public Affairs
916-296-5945 (cell)
keckery@sdatholic.org

Aida Bustos
Manager of Media Relations
619-850-1384 (cell)
abustos@sdatholic.org

DSD+