
Diocese of Buffalo

Office of Communications



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Diocese of Buffalo Fulfills Chapter 11 Reorganization Plan Filing

(Buffalo, New York) — The Diocese of Buffalo has today filed its Chapter 11 reorganization plan with the Federal Bankruptcy Court, as it committed to doing when reaching a settlement with the Creditors Committee last April. The plan aims primarily to provide for financial restitution to survivor-victims of past sexual abuse by members of the clergy and other employees and volunteers of the Diocese and affiliated Catholic entities. It also outlines the financial restructuring of the Diocese, enabling it to continue the essential Catholic ministries carried out across Western New York.

“Since becoming Bishop nearly five years ago, I have continued to assert that we have no higher priority than to work toward the healing of those who have been harmed spiritually, mentally and physically by the crime of sexual abuse, and to provide some semblance of justice and closure,” said **Bishop Michael W. Fisher**. “This plan represents our best effort to deliver on that priority, as we also work to define a new, more hopeful era of Catholic faith and impact across our region.”

This reorganization plan provides for the financial restructuring of the Diocese and the settlement of all, or substantially all, claims against the Diocese, including the settlement of all abuse claims against the Diocese and participating parties, as allowed for under New York’s Child Victims’ Act.

The plan stipulates that funding for a settlement trust and the Abuse Claims Settlement Fund will be provided from—among other potential sources of recovery—a monetary contribution by the Diocese and other Participating Parties in the amount of \$150,000,000. Participating Parties include all parishes of the Diocese, as well as affiliate Catholic organizations. The Plan also provides for other potential sources of funding for the Abuse Claims Settlement Fund. As indicated in the reorganization plan, this includes contributions by several of the largest diocesan insurers—CNA, Wausau, and AIG—which have committed a combined additional contribution of \$123.9 million to the Settlement Fund. Diocesan attorneys continue their negotiations with other insurers with the aim of increasing the total amount of insurer contributions provided for under prevailing coverages.

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The Diocese filed for Chapter 11 reorganization on February 28, 2020, during which time Bishop Edward Scharfenberger served as Apostolic Administrator. The primary purpose for doing so, as stated at the time and reiterated by Bishop Fisher following his appointment in January 2021, was to ensure financial restitution for the largest number of victim-survivors, while enabling the Diocese to continue to carry-out its spiritual and social services ministries throughout Western New York.

The Diocese's full Reorganization Plan can be accessed [HERE](#).

The Diocese of Buffalo will continue to communicate developments as it continues through the process to emerge from Chapter 11.