

P R E S S R E L E A S E

TO: [local and LA newspapers]
FROM: Voice of the Faithful, Santa Barbara Area
DATE: July 18, 2007

PRESS RELEASE: For immediate release

Voice of the Faithful Santa Barbara Area applauds the 508 survivors of clergy sexual abuse who were brave enough to come forward and take part in the civil suit against the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The settlement recently announced represents a measure of compensation for their suffering. It is also recognition—long overdue—of the seriousness of the crimes committed against them.

Just as important as the monetary compensation is the agreement that church files will be opened to the public, after vetting by a respected, impartial retired justice of the California Supreme Court. Indeed, it is regrettable that the Archdiocese spent so much time and so many dollars on efforts to prevent such disclosure. The current crisis of confidence in the church is due more to revelations about what church leaders knew and concealed than about the crimes of individual malefactors. The truth, however painful, is necessary to the process of healing and reconciliation.

Voice of the Faithful calls on area Catholics to remain vigilant and to continue to press for a full accounting of what happened in our Archdiocese and in the church around the world. Standing with those who have been abused, and with all clergy and laity who work for a better church, we call for an end to the culture of secrecy that enabled the continuation of such horrors for so many decades.

[end]