



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

240 E. ONONDAGA STREET, SYRACUSE, NY 13202-2608

April 19, 2021

Dear Diocesan Family,

Ten months ago, I announced the filing of a Chapter 11 case for reorganization of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse before the United States Bankruptcy Court. On November 6, 2020, the aforementioned court established April 15, 2021 at 11:59 pm ET, as the deadline to file proofs of claims against the diocese (the “Bar Date”). As of today, I have been informed that 371 claims are filed in relation to the NYS Child’s Victims Act.

One victim of sexual abuse is too many! And so, to see the number “371” is particularly disheartening and of the greatest concern for me because of the damage done both directly and collaterally. To all victims of sexual abuse, I renew my commitment and that of this local Church to assist you in the healing process. We seek to make amends for the wrong and sinful behavior perpetrated against you and cannot apologize enough for the failure to protect you from your abusers.

When we began the reorganization process, also known as “Chapter 11” on June 19, 2020, it was explained that: *“Chapter 11 is a voluntary action taken by a company or entity to reorganize financially with the goals of being able to respond to the financial claims of those to whom it owes money and to emerge with its operations intact.”* Of particular concern to me was how the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse could respond in a just and fair manner to the claims of sexual abuse arising from the NYS Child’s Victim Act.

At the time, I explained that: *“This diocese has limited resources for adequately responding to claimants under the Child Victims Act. We believe and hope that Chapter 11 will provide the victims, any other claimants, the diocese, and its insurers with a method where all of these claims can be settled, and the victims compensated in a fair and timely manner. As part of our Reorganization Plan, the diocese intends to create a fund with a pool of money from both diocesan funds and money from insurance carriers.”* So now we begin the next phase in the reorganization process having passed the deadline to file proofs of claim against the Diocese. In this phase, we will work with the Creditors Committee and the insurance companies to arrive at a plan that will compensate victims and allow the Diocese to emerge from Chapter 11. Such a settlement will be arrived at with the help of legal counsel and the supervision of the United States Bankruptcy Court, Northern District of New York.

Over the course of the coming months, I ask you to pray with me for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as both Advocate and Consoler for this work, so that it might bear much healing and fruit for those involved. Particularly, I seek a reasonable way to assist the victims of child abuse in the Diocese of Syracuse which fosters restoration and renewal in their lives as children of God.

*Faith • Hope • Charity*

With this in mind, I wish to invite members of the Diocesan family, especially those who have been victims of abuse, to a Mass for Healing at 12 Noon on Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Syracuse. This time of prayer during National Child Abuse Prevention Month will particularly pray for the gifts of healing and fortitude for all victims of crime and oppression and will include a special blessing during the Mass.

Having just celebrated Divine Mercy Sunday, I again place our diocesan family under the loving care of the Sacred Heart of Jesus praying that He will make our hearts more like His through this time of purification and reparation. Please know my prayers for you and your loved ones continue and I ask humbly for your prayers for all victims, as well as, for me and the Church of Syracuse.

In the Name of Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Douglas J. Lucia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Douglas J. Lucia  
Bishop of Syracuse