



DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD

Statement on Settlement

With the announcement today of a settlement with John Doe, I hope another step is taken toward embracing a trauma informed response in our handling of sexual abuse crimes. We as a Church must continue to do more for survivors and we must do it in a quicker and more sensitive fashion. I commend John Doe for his courage in coming forward in this matter and by his persistence highlighting areas we must improve. We will. During the pendency of this case and after an extensive search, we hired Michael Collins to lead our Office of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance. I am confident he will provide helpful leadership as we strive to improve.

Mr. Doe's allegations were determined to be credible, therefore, any public statement made on behalf of the Diocese in May or June of 2019 that is inconsistent with that is withdrawn. We apologize to Mr. Doe for any harm those statements caused. We regret that interaction with the Diocese and civil litigation, often the last stop in trying to resolve these cases, can leave survivors feeling revictimized. By our agreement with John Doe, we are grateful to bring the legal process to a mutually acceptable conclusion after receiving the assistance of a Superior Court Judge. However, our work is not done. Reflecting on what we have learned from Mr. Doe's reporting and case, we must continue to take into account all perspectives in addressing claims of survivors and helping survivors in their healing process.

We reaffirm that the Diocese has zero tolerance with respect to sexual abuse of children. As a Diocese, we require reporting of anyone suspected of committing potential abuse. Further, concealing abuse and dissuading anyone from reporting abuse is contrary to the values of the Diocese, and any employee that is found to have violated those values will face discipline up to and including termination and referral to civil authorities. As a Church we have learned from Mr. Doe and improved our processes. For that we thank Mr. Doe and wish him the best in his ongoing efforts to deal with the effects of abuse. The Diocese's assistance with counseling remains available to Mr. Doe as he travels that path, as it is with all survivors who assert credible claims of abuse by Diocesan personnel.

Most Rev. William D. Byrne
Bishop of Springfield

May 26, 2023