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Independent Oversight Committee of the Independent Reconciliation and Reparation Program Operated on Behalf of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Publishes its Final Report

LANCASTER, Pa., June 2, 2022 — The Independent Oversight Committee overseeing the Independent Reconciliation and Reparation Program (IRRP) operated on behalf of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced the release of its final report today.

The IRRP was launched on November 13, 2018 to provide compensation and supportive services to victims of childhood sexual abuse by clergy of the Philadelphia Archdiocese.

The program was administered by Attorney Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, who were selected based on their extensive experience with the administration of sexual abuse claims and settlement funds of various kinds. Lynn Shiner, former Director of the Office of Victim Services of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, was selected to serve as the program's Victim Support Facilitator.

The Honorable Lawrence F. Stengel (retired), former Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; the Honorable Kelley B. Hodge, former District Attorney for Philadelphia; and attorney Charles Scheeler, a prominent lawyer with a national law firm, were appointed to serve on the Independent Oversight Committee. (Judge Stengel chaired the committee, after assuming the role of former Senator George Mitchell).

The Independent Oversight Committee was charged with reviewing the claims administration process, ensuring compliance of the program with the IRRP's adopted protocol, and publicly reporting on the progress of the program. The committee earlier published three interim reports.

The IRRP was formed in recognition of the need for reconciliation and reparations for victims of childhood sexual abuse by clergy members and designed to assist victims, regardless of when the harm occurred, while understanding that no remedy can fully recognize what they endured.

The committee's final report, which provides a variety of data and statistics, notes that, to date, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has paid a total of \$78,465,000 to the 438 claimants who have accepted offers of compensation.

Claimants were given the opportunity, if so desired, to both meet with the claims administrators and work with the Victim Support Facilitator, Ms. Shiner. Ms. Shiner also worked with the committee and the Archdiocese to establish internal best practices for the Archdiocese, provided input for internal training programs, and made recommendations to the Archdiocese regarding other appropriate outreach and events that would help promote emotional and spiritual healing.

The program provided for positive collaboration with law enforcement to ensure that any allegations of clergy sexual abuse received as part of the IRRP process were reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. That practice mirrored existing Archdiocesan policy of reporting alleged criminal activity to law enforcement regardless of the timing of the alleged conduct or the status of the alleged perpetrator.

Per the committee's final report, the program was effective in meeting the goals of compensating claimants and providing them with supportive services, as well as in giving the Archdiocese the opportunity to make valuable commitments to continue to monitor best practices in the safe environment policy field, periodically evaluate its own policies, and be equipped to adapt and evolve its approaches as needed.

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