

## Statement from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles

The Archdiocese has not been served with the lawsuit. Fr. Honesto Bayranta Bismonte, currently 90 years old, came to the Archdiocese from the Philippines in 1981. The Archdiocese immediately removed him from ministry in April 2002 when it first learned about misconduct that had been reported by the plaintiff in the current lawsuit to the campus minister at her high school in Riverside. The plaintiff reported that she knew Fr. Bismonte through a personal relationship he had with her family in Fontana. The matter was reported to law enforcement and announcements were made at all of the parishes where Fr. Bismonte had served urging anyone with information to come forward. He was arrested by the Fontana Police Department and charged with four counts of sexual assault on minors. Two other victims came forward after the plaintiff made her report. Fr. Bismonte pled guilty to a misdemeanor count of nonsexual battery and was sentenced to two years probation. Fr. Bismonte was added in 2004 to the Archdiocese' Report to the People of God, which lists priests accused of sexual misconduct involving minors.

The Archdiocese has stringent policies and programs to address and prevent abuse including:

- the Archdiocese's Zero Tolerance Policy which permanently removes from any capacity anyone, clergy or lay person, who has been found to have abused a minor;
- Victims Assistance Ministry to support victims and report abuse to the authorities;
- protection and prevention programs that since 2002 have trained hundreds of thousands of children and adults in abuse prevention, and have background checked and fingerprinted nearly 250,000 adults who work with minors;
- and an independent Clergy Oversight Advisory Board (CMOB), that includes lay experts and victims, to oversee investigations into allegations of abuse by clergy conducted by retired FBI investigators. CMOB replaced the Archdiocese's Sexual Abuse Advisory Board (SAAB) established in the 1990s, strengthening the role of the Board with more lay oversight.

The Archdiocese also is participating in a newly established [independent compensation program](#) in California that is available to any person who has been sexually abused as a minor by diocesan priests, no matter when that abuse might have occurred.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles again offers its most sincere apology to every person who has been harmed by a member of the Church and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the support and healing of victim-survivors and to ensuring that parishes, schools and ministries are safe places for everyone in our community.

For more information on the abuse prevention and protection efforts of the Archdiocese, visit: [protect.la-archdiocese.org](http://protect.la-archdiocese.org).

***Attachment:*** April 2002 announcements read at parishes where Fr. Bismonte had served.

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