



# *The Diocese of Knoxville*

Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee

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## Statement regarding Michael Boyd lawsuit

KNOXVILLE--- As an act of pastoral outreach and without admitting wrongdoing, the Diocese of Knoxville has agreed to a request by Mr. Michael Boyd for a financial settlement of the lawsuit he filed against the diocese in July 2019.

The diocese has throughout denied the validity of the claim. However, the diocese also recognizes that further pursuing this matter through the legal system could be time-consuming, costly, and detrimental to its mission of service.

“Despite my personal feelings regarding the claim which names two now-deceased priests, I hope that this action offers Mr. Boyd a path to peace and reconciliation,” said Bishop Richard F. Stika.

When first presented with Mr. Boyd’s allegations in 2018, the diocese immediately contacted state authorities and encouraged Mr. Boyd to file a report with law enforcement. The diocese also turned over materials made available by Mr. Boyd to an independent and highly qualified criminal defense attorney not connected with the Diocese of Knoxville or its Diocesan Review Board.

“This diocese remains committed to acting with compassion and prudence regarding abuse allegations,” Bishop Stika said.

The Diocese of Knoxville has never diverted financial resources toward the settlement of a legal claim related to allegations of sexual abuse.

This settlement will be covered by insurance and will not impact the diocesan budget or its charitable missions.

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