

Developments in clergy abuse crisis

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More than two years after it began, the clerical sexual abuse crisis continues to have a strong impact on the Roman Catholic Church in America. Among the key recent developments:

- The Archdiocese of Portland, Ore., last Tuesday became the first to declare bankruptcy as it faced multimillion-dollar clergy sex abuse claims. The Diocese of Tucson, Ariz., is considering a similar move.
- The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has joined a constitutional challenge to a California law that has enabled hundreds of alleged abuse victims to sue. The law temporarily eliminated the state statute of limitations in civil cases. About 400 claims are pending against the archdiocese.
- A grand jury that has been investigating sex abuse claims in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for more than a year has heard testimony from several top archdiocesan officials, including the former archbishop, Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua.
- A grand jury is investigating claims against Bishop Thomas Dupre, who resigned as head of the Diocese of Springfield, Mass., after two men said he sexually abused them in the 1970s. The men have filed civil suits.