



The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco filed for bankruptcy on Monday, saying a Chapter 11 reorganization will facilitate a settlement of about 500 lawsuits accusing the church of enabling childhood sexual abuse by priests.

The filing in U.S. bankruptcy court in San Francisco will put the lawsuits on hold and buy time for settlement talks, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone said in a statement.

"We believe the bankruptcy process is the best way to provide a compassionate and equitable solution for survivors of abuse while ensuring that we continue the vital ministries to the faithful and to the communities that rely on our services and charity," Cordileone said.

The "overwhelming majority" of the alleged abuse occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, involving priests who are deceased or no longer in ministry, Cordileone said.

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