

October 30, 2022

Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre
Pastoral Center
3940 Poplar Level Road
Louisville, KY 40213-1463

Dear Archbishop:

Since January 14, 2020, we have repeatedly petitioned the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) directly or through the National Review Board (NRB) about illegal silencing of victims of clergy sexual abuse. This silencing is a violation of Article 3 of the 2002 Dallas Charter. Although a nationwide problem, this violation was highlighted by the case of Michael Boyd vs. the Diocese of Knoxville, settled in November 2019. Bishop Richard F. Stika and attorney Gino Marchetti presented Mr. Boyd with settlement papers that included a Nondisclosure Agreement forbidding Boyd from speaking about his clergy sexual abuse. Although the NDA was removed by Plaintiff lawyers, a Non Disparaging Agreement was inserted in its place. This silenced Mr. Boyd against his will as surely as the Nondisclosure Agreement.

Archbishop Jose Gomez, president of the USCCB, and Bishop James ‘Vann’ Johnston, Jr, head of USCCB Child and Youth Protection division, refuse to act. Repeated letters have been ignored. I have never received a response from any bishop, archbishop, cardinal or official in Rome.

Both Gomez and Johnston are scheduled to end their tenure in their current elected offices. Before they leave with no accountability on this grave violation, I ask that you act to rectify this injustice, at least in the Tennessee dioceses of Memphis, Nashville and Knoxville.

Although Bishop Stika and Attorney Marchetti are responsible for the Boyd violation of Article 3, all settlements in all three Tennessee dioceses have contained silencing agreements since the Dallas Charter of 2002.. That is

twenty years of blatant violations under the guidance of the following bishops in Tennessee: Joseph Kurtz, Knoxville; Richard Stika (current) Knoxville; Edward Kmiec, Nashville; David Choby, Nashville; Mark Spalding (current), Nashville; Terry Steib, Memphis; Martin Holley, Memphis; David Talley (current), Memphis. These bishops and their diocesan lawyers are actively involved in cover-up and silencing.

In light of the failure of the USCCB, Archbishop Jose Gomez and Bishop James Johnston to act to correct this, we are requesting that you declare all silencing language null and void within the scope of your archdiocese. Perhaps then, other bishops and archbishops will correct this deliberate violation of victim rights.

The failure of the USCCB under the guidance of Archbishop Jose Gomez and the failure of the leader of the division of Child and Youth Protection is well documented. Those who have violated Article 3 of the Dallas Charter are numerous and widespread. Someone must begin the healing. Someone must stand up and remove the burden of silencing from victims. You have the power to do so in the realm of your archdiocese. You could make a difference. The question is will you have the courage to do so.

Sincerely,

Susan Vance
RemembertheSurvivors.com
SNAP of Tennessee (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests)

Printed name:

Signature:

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