1	FOLEY & LARDNER LLP			
2	Jeffrey R. Blease (CA Bar. No. 134933)			
2	Tel: (617) 226-3155; jblease@foley.com Thomas F. Carlucci (CA Bar No. 135767)			
3	Tel: (415) 984-9824; tcarlucci@foley.com			
4	Shane J. Moses (CA Bar No. 250533)			
•	Tel: (415) 438-6404; smoses@foley.com Emil P. Khatchatourian (CA Bar No. 265290)			
5	Tel: (312) 832-5156; ekhatchatourian@foley.com			
6	Ann Marie Uetz (admitted <i>pro hac vice</i> )			
	Tel: (313) 234-7114; auetz@foley.com Matthew D. Lee (admitted <i>pro hac vice</i> )			
7	Tel: (608) 258-4203; mdlee@foley.com 555 California Street, Suite 1700			
8	San Francisco, CA 94104-1520			
9	Counsel for the Debtor			
	Counsel for the Debtor and Debtor in Possession			
10	UNITED STATES B	ANKRUP	PTCY COURT	
11				
12	NORTHERN DISTR	ACT OF C	CALIFORNIA	
	OAKLAN	D DIVISI	ION	
13	In re:	Cogo N	o. 23-40523 WJL	
14	in re.	Case IV	0. 23-40323 WJL	
1.5	THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF	Chapter	r 11	
15	OAKLAND, a California corporation sole,	DEBT	OR'S FOURTH MOTION FOR	
16	Debtor.		R EXTENDING EXCLUSIVE	
17			ODS FOR THE DEBTOR TO FILE OLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF A	
			TER 11 PLAN	
18		Judge:	Hon. William J. Lafferty	
19		Date:	August 21, 2024	
20		Time:	10:30 a.m.	
21		Place:	United States Bankruptcy Court 1300 Clay Street	
			Courtroom 220	
22			Oakland, CA 94612	
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				

-1-

///

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland, a California corporation sole, and the debtor and debtor in possession (the "<u>Debtor</u>" or "<u>RCBO</u>") in the above-captioned chapter 11 bankruptcy case (the "<u>Chapter 11 Case</u>" or the "<u>Chapter 11 Case</u>"), hereby files this fourth motion (the "<u>Motion</u>") for entry of an order further extending the exclusive periods under sections 1121(b) and (c)(3) of the Bankruptcy Code by two months to allow the Debtor until November 8, 2024 (the "<u>Exclusive Filing Period</u>"), to file a chapter 11 plan, and until January 8, 2025, to solicit acceptances of its plan (the "<u>Exclusive Solicitation Period</u>," and together with the Exclusive Filing Period, the "<u>Exclusivity Periods</u>").

This Motion is based on the Memorandum of Points and Authorities set forth herein, the notice of hearing on the Motion, the *Declaration of Attila Bardos in Support of Debtor's Fourth Motion for Order Extending Exclusive Periods For The Debtor To File and Solicit Acceptance of a Chapter 11 Plan (the "Bardos Declaration"*) filed concurrently herewith and incorporated herein by reference, and upon such oral and documentary evidence as may be presented at the hearing on the Motion.

The Debtor's proposed form of order is attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the "Proposed Order").

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

# **Table of Contents**

III. BACKO		FACTS	
<b>A.</b>	GENERAL BACKGROUND		
В.	THE I	DEBTOR'S POST-PETITION ACTIVITIES AND CASE PROGRESS	
С.	PROG	RESS IN THE INSURANCE ADVERSARY PROCEEDINGS	
D.		UCTION OF DOCUMENTS TO THE COMMITTEE AND INSURERS PPORT OF MEDIATION	
E.	MEDI	ATION WITH THE COMMITTEE AND INSURERS	
IV. RELIEF	REQUE	STED	
V. BASIS F	OR RELI	EF	1
<b>A.</b>	A. 11 U.S.C. § 1121(D) PERMITS THIS COURT TO EXTEND THE DEBTOR'S EXCLUSIVITY PERIOD		1
В.	THE F LIMIT	REQUESTED RELIEF FALLS WITHIN THE STATUTORY TIME	1
С.	GOOD CAUSE EXISTS TO EXTEND THE DEBTOR'S EXCLUSIVITY PERIOD		1
	1.	Size and Complexity of the Case	1
	2.	Amount of Time Elapsed in the Case	1
	3.	Existence of Good Faith Progress	1
	4.	The Debtor is Paying its Post-Petition Bills as They Become Due	1
	5.	The Debtor Has Reasonable Prospects of Filing a Viable Plan	1
	6.	The Necessity of Sufficient Time for the Debtor to Negotiate a Plan	1
	7.	The Debtor Has Made Progress in Negotiations with its Creditors	1
	8.	The Debtor is Not Seeking an Extension to Pressure Creditors	1
	9.	Unresolved Contingencies	1
D.		REQUESTED EXTENSION WILL FACILITATE MOVING THE CASE	1
VI. RESER	VATION	OF RIGHTS	1
VII. NOTIC	E		1

Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 3 of 25

# **Table of Authorities**

2		Page(s)
3	Cases	
4	In re Adelphia Commc'ns Corp.,	
5	352 B.R. 578 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2006)	14
5	In re Borders Grp., Inc.,	17
6	460 B.R. 818	
7	In re Catholic Bishop of N. Alaska, No. F08-00110-DMD, 2009 WL 8412171 (Bankr. D. Alaska Sept. 11, 2009)	14
8	In re Dow Corning Corp.,	
	208 B.R. 661 (Bankr. E.D. Mich. 1997)	13, 14, 21
9	In re Express One Int'l, Inc.,	12 14 20
10	194 B.R. 98 (Bankr. E.D. Tex. 1996)	13, 14, 20
10	Gaines v. Perkins (In re Perkins),	12 17
11	71 B.R. 294 (W.D. Tenn. 1987)	12, 17
10	282 B.R. 444 (B.A.P. 9th Cir. 2002)	12 13 15 16 22
12	In re Homestead Partners, Ltd.,	12, 13, 13, 10, 22
13	197 B.R. 706 (Bankr. N.D. Ga., 1996)	22 23
	In re Lionel Corp.,	22, 23
14	722 F.2d	23
15	In re New Meatco Provisions, LLC,	
13	No. 2:13-BK-22155-PC, 2014 WL 917335 (Bankr. C.D. Cal. Mar. 10, 2014)	14
16	In re Public Service Co. of New Hampshire, 88 B.R. 521 (Bankr. D.N.H. 1988)	12
17	In re Texaco Inc.,	
18	76 B.R. 322 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 1987)	
10	In re United Press Int'l.,	1.6
19	60 B.R. 265 (Bankr. D.D.C. 1986)	16
20	Statutes	
21	11 U.S.C. § 365	24
	11 U.S.C. §§ 1107(a) and 1108	3
22	11 U.S.C. § 1121	
23	11 U.S.C. § 1121(b), (c)(2)	
23	11 U.S.C. § 1121(c)(2)	
24	11 U.S.C. § 1121(c)(3)	
٥. ا	11 U.S.C. §§ 1121(b), (c)(3)	
25	11 U.S.C. § 1121(d)   11 U.S.C. § 1121(d)(2)	10, 11, 12, 13, 13
26	11 U.S.C. § 1121(d)(2)(B)	
	28 U.S.C. § 157(b)	
27	28 U.S.C. § 1930(a)(6)	6
28	28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334	
	Case: 23-40523	16 Page 4 of

1	28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409
2	28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 5 of

I.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Debtor requests a fourth and final extension of the time in which it has the exclusive right to file and solicit votes on a Chapter 11 plan. This would extend the Debtor's exclusivity period a modest but much-needed two months.

The Debtor believes it has made significant progress toward a reorganization plan during the first 15 months of this complex and difficult Chapter 11 Case. Since the Court approved the Debtor's most recent request for an extension of exclusivity, the Debtor's attention and efforts have been mainly focused on two things: (1) developing a plan of reorganization to present to this Court for confirmation, through continued mediation with the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors (the "Committee") and, since June 2024 through commencing mediation with its historical insurance carriers (the "Insurers"); and (2) continuing to aggressively pursue recovery on its insurance assets through two adversary proceedings now pending in District Court (the "Insurance Coverage Litigation"). In furtherance of these efforts during the past four months, the Debtor has continued to provide extensive documentation and information to the Committee in response to the Committee's priority diligence requests in support of mediation; begun mediation with the Insurers including the submission of mediation statements and other documents to the insurance mediators; litigated the most recent round of motions to dismiss and commenced discovery in the Insurance Coverage Litigation; and participated in multiple days of mediation with the Committee and one mediation meeting thus far with the Insurers.

The Debtor believes it will continue to make progress toward a Chapter 11 plan. Thus far, the Debtor believes it has made progress on certain issues in mediation between the Debtor and Committee which will help to develop a plan of reorganization, and has begun mediation with the insurers regarding coverage issues. After separate meetings between the court-approved mediators (Judge Sontchi, Judge Newsome and Tim Gallagher) and each of the Debtor and Committee, the Debtor held joint two-day mediation sessions with Judge Sontchi and the Committee in March, April, May, and June. Weekly one-hour sessions were held in July, and further mediation sessions between the Debtor and Committee are scheduled for August and September 2024. After independent meetings with Judge Newsome and Tim Gallagher, the first joint mediation session with them and the Insurers was held on June 18, 2024. The FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

ase: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 6 of

4 5 6

7

8

9

11

10

12 13

14

15

16

17

18 19

20

21

22 23

24

25

26

27 28 **General Background** 

On May 8, 2023 (the "Petition Date"), the Debtor filed a voluntary petition for chapter 11 bankruptcy relief under the Bankruptcy Code. The Debtor continues to operate its ministry and manage FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

parties have subsequently submitted confidential mediation statements and additional information to the insurance mediators, and the Debtor anticipates that further mediation sessions will be scheduled in the coming months.

The Debtor needs additional time to continue mediation as described above, evaluate how a plan can be structured, and prepare a proposed plan. It remains the Debtor's objective to reach a resolution, through mediation, which will result in a consensual plan of reorganization to be proposed by the Debtor being confirmed by this Court, without competing plans on file. Even if not fully consensual, the Debtor anticipates proposing a plan of reorganization on or by November 8<sup>th</sup>. The Bankruptcy Code contemplates that a diligent debtor should have the opportunity to take these actions and without material opposition negotiate plan terms free of the distractions of competing plans. Under the circumstances presented here, the Debtor's request for a fourth extension of the Exclusivity Periods should be granted.

The Debtor therefore seeks a two-month extension of the Exclusivity Periods provided in section 1121 of the Bankruptcy Code, extending the Debtor's exclusive period for filing a plan to November 8, 2024, and its exclusive period for soliticiting votes on a plan to January 8, 2025. For the reasons set forth below, cause exists for these extensions.

II.

#### **JURISDICTION**

This Court has jurisdiction to consider this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334. This is a core proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 157(b), the Order Referring Bankruptcy Cases and Proceedings to Bankruptcy Judges, General Order No. 24 (N.D. Cal.), and Local Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure for the Northern District of California 5011-1(a). Venue for this matter is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409.

The legal basis for the relief requested herein is section 1121 of the Bankruptcy Code.

III.

#### BACKGROUND FACTS

Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 7 of Doc# 1273 Case: 23-40523

4859-7926-6770.4

A.

its properties as a debtor in possession under sections 1107(a) and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code. No trustee has been appointed in this Chapter 11 Case.

On May 23, 2023, the Office of the United States Trustee for Region 17 (the "<u>U.S. Trustee</u>") appointed the Committee.

The Debtor is a corporation sole organized under the laws of the State of California. The Debtor conducts its civil affairs under the laws of the State of California and the United States of America and in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, the ecclesiastical law of the Roman Catholic Church. Additional information regarding the Debtor, its mission, ministries, and operations, and the events and circumstances preceding the Petition Date, is set forth in the *Declaration of Charles Moore, Managing Director of Alvarez & Marsal North America, LLC, Proposed Restructuring Advisor to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland, in Support of Chapter 11 Petition and First Day Pleadings* [Docket No. 19], which is incorporated herein by reference.

# B. <u>The Debtor's Post-Petition Activities and Case Progress</u>

All in all, this Chapter 11 case has been marked by efficient administration, collaboration, and minimal need for the Court's intervention. The Debtor focused on a smooth transition into Chapter 11 and obtained essential first day and other relief. After filing its first day motions (collectively, the "First Day Motions"), the Debtor worked constructively with the US Trustee, and, after its appointment, the Committee, to resolve disputes and issues regarding those motions. As a result of these efforts, the Debtor was able to obtain consensual final orders on all but one of the First Day Motions, and substantially narrow the issues prior to obtaining a Court ruling on the one First Day Motion not consensually resolved.

The Debtor timely filed, and later amended, its Schedules of Assets and Liabilities (as amended, the "Schedules") and Statement of Financial Affairs on May 22, 2023 [Docket Nos. 82, 137 and 169].

The Debtor also obtained approval for employment of its bankruptcy professionals and for employment of ordinary course professionals, complied with the US Trustee's reporting requirements in connection with the Initial Debtor Interview and 341 meeting, and filed and obtained approval of numerous other administrative motions in furtherance of the case. In particular, the Debtor filed a motion to set a bar date and obtain approval of claims procedures. After extensive negotiation, the Debtor and

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 8 of

the Committee were able to reach an agreed bar date and claims procedures order, which was entered by the Court on July 25, 2023 (the "Bar Date Order").

In addition to the foregoing, during the first 15 months of this Chapter 11 Case the Debtor and its professionals have, among other things:

- Established a constructive relationship with the U.S. Trustee and the Committee, allowing the consensual resolution of numerous matters, including most recently the Debtor's second motion seeking approval of a premium financing agreement to allow the Debtor to pay its insurance premiums.
- Filed a motion to authorize retention of ordinary course professionals, which was granted by an order entered on July 20, 2023.
- Timely filed all Monthly Operating Reports, pursuant to the Court's *Order (1) Pursuant to L.B.R. 2015-2(e) Extending Time to File Monthly Operating Reports, and (2) Modifying Order for Payment of State and Federal Taxes* [Docket No. 165].
- Provided extensive reporting to the US Trustee in advance of the Initial Debtor Interview, in response to the US Trustee's *Chapter 11 Initial Reporting Requirements and Document Requests*, and attended the Initial Debtor Interview, which was conducted and concluded on June 9, 2023. The Debtor also provided additional information requested by the US Trustee following the Initial Debtor Interview. The Debtor has responded to all information requests from the U.S. Trustee.
- Attended the Section 341 Meeting of Creditors, which was held and concluded on June 21, 2023. Bishop Michael Barber, Paul Bongiovanni (the Debtor's CFO at the time), and Charles Moore of Alvarez & Marsal North America, LLC (the Debtor's restructuring advisor) testified at the meeting.
- Filed a motion for rejection of an executory contract, to reduce administrative costs.
- Filed two adversary complaints seeking declaratory and breach of contract relief regarding insurance coverage for abuse claims, titled *Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland v. Pacific Indemnity, et. al.*, Adversary Proceeding No. 23-04028 (the "Insurance Adversary Proceeding"), and *Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland v. American Home Assurance Co. et al.*, Adversary Proceeding No. 23-04037 (the "Additional Insurance Adversary Proceeding"). These adversary proceedings (collectively, the "Insurance Coverage Litigation") seeking to liquidate the Debtor's claims against numerous of its historical insurance carriers.
- Following extensive discussions with the Committee, secured approval of a motion to set September 11, 2023, as the bar date and to approve claims procedures and proof of claim forms [Docket No. 181] (the "Bar Date Motion"). The Court entered the Bar Date Order, on July 25, 2023 [Docket No. 293].
- Following the general claims bar date of September 11, 2023, pursuant to the Bar Date order, reviewed and analyzed hundreds of proofs of claim, including 421 proofs of claim alleging claims related to sexual abuse.
- Negotiated and reached agreement with the Committee on the terms of a confidentiality agreement and protective order filed with the Court on July 21, 2023, and addressed numerous additional issues raised by the Insurers, leading to a modified confidentiality and

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 9 of

24 25

22

23

26 27

28

protective order approved by the Court on January 30, 2024 (the "Confidentiality and Protective Order"), governing the Debtor providing the Committee and Insurers with confidential documents and information requested in this Chapter 11 Case.

- Produced thousands of documents to the Committee and to the Insurers, as discussed further below.
- Obtained multiple extensions of the statutory deadlines for assumption and rejection of non-residential real property leases, and for removal of state court actions to the bankruptcy court, to allow the Debtor to analyze these issues in connection with its overall approach to the case. In particular, the Debtor most recently obtained a further extension of time, through October 1, 2024, the Debtor's time to assume or reject its lease agreement with Catholic Cathedral Corporation of the East Bay for use of the Oakland Cathedral and the RCBO chancery offices.
- After extensive negotiations with the Committee, filed a joint motion seeking approval for mediation and appointment of mediators, ultimately leading to entry, on January 22, 2024, of an order approving mediation and appointing mediators both between the Debtor and the Committee regarding formulation of a consensual plan, and between the Debtor and its Insurers regarding the issues raised in the Insurance Adversary Proceedings.
- Obtained approval for modifications to the cap on payment of Ordinary Court Professionals, and retained additional Ordinary Course Professionals, in order to address the developing needs of the Debtor.
- Participated in multiple rounds of in-person mediation with the Committee and participated in an initial mediation session with the Insurers, both as described in more detail herein.
- Defended multiple rounds of motions to dismiss the Insurance Coverage Litigation, most recently in the District Court, and begun discovery in the Insurance Coverage Litigation, as further described below.
- Timely paid all amounts owed to the U.S. Trustee under 28 U.S.C. § 1930(a)(6).

After the initial period of the case and resolution of the First Day Motions, the Debtor's efforts focused on the bar date and claims process, litigating the Insurance Adversary Proceedings, and setting up a process for mediation with the Committee and Insurers toward a negotiated resolution of issues in the case and a consensual plan. Since the last extension of exclusivity, the Debtor's focus in this Chapter 11 Case has been on the two tracks of mediation and the Insurance Coverage Litigation. Each of these areas is discussed in more detail below.

#### C. **Progress in the Insurance Adversary Proceedings**

The insurance policies providing coverage for sexual abuse claims, maintained by the Debtor over a period of several decades, are an essential asset of the estate. This coverage will be a critical part of any plan of reorganization. On June 22, 2023, the Debtor filed its adversary proceeding complaint for

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 10 Case: 23-40523

declaratory relief and breach of contract, seeking to liquidate the Debtor's claims against numerous of its historical Insurers [AP 23-04028, Docket No. 2]. On August 30, 2023, the Debtor filed an additional adversary proceeding complaint, seeking declaratory relief and alleging breach of contract against two additional Insurers [AP 23-04037, Docket No. 1]. Any proceeds the Debtor wins in a judgment in this Insurance Coverage Litigation, or obtains through a negotiated resolution, will infuse the estate with unrestricted cash assets, which can be used to, among other things, contribute to unsecured creditor recoveries.

Following an initial round of motions to dismiss in late 2023, on December 18, 2023, the Debtor filed its second amended complaint [AP 23-04028, Docket No. 161]. On January 12, 2024, the Debtor filed its third amended complaint [AP 23-04028, Docket No. 163] (the "Third Amended Complaint").

The defendant Insurers filed motions to withdraw the reference as to the Insurance Coverage Litigation, on February 2 and February 6, 2024 [AP 23-04028, Docket Nos. 188, 190]. In order to avoid unnecessary delay and additional cost to the estate, the Debtor filed statements of non-opposition to those motions, and on March 18, 2024, the District Court ordered withdrawal of the reference as to the Insurance Coverage Litigation.<sup>2</sup> In response to the Third Amended Complaint, the defendant Insurers variously filed two motions to dismiss [AP 23-04028, Docket Nos. 173, 175], a motion to dismiss and/or for more definite statement [AP 23-04028, Docket No. 171] (collectively, the "Motions to Dismiss"), and two answers [AP 23-04028, Docket Nos. 164, 165].

The Motions to Dismiss were heard by the District Court on July 11, 2024. The District Court granted the Motions to Dismiss with leave to amend, but in doing so made it clear that the action would be moving forward. In fact, the District Court ordered that discovery in the cases continue even while the Debtor prepares the amendment directed by the District Court, emphasizing that "discovery is open now." [Dist. Ct. Case No. 3:24-cv-00709-JSC, Docket No. 103, Transcript of July 11, 2024, Hearing, at p. 36:22]. In response to a request from certain Insurer defendants that discovery not go forward pending an amended complaint, the District Court stated that: "You know what your reservation of rights are, what your

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 11

4859-7926-6770.4

One of these Insurers has since been voluntarily dismissed without prejudice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The remaining defendant Insurer in the second Insurance Coverage Litigation action also moved for withdrawal of the reference on March 21, 2024, and that motion was subsequently granted. Both Insurance Coverage Litigation matters are consolidated in front of Judge Corley in the District Court.

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

potential defenses are, so you know what discovery you need to do. I don't -- we're not slowing this down for the pleading. Not going to do that." [*Id.*, p. 37:17 -p38:8]. The Debtor's further amended complaint is due on September 12, 2024, following a court-ordered meet and confer regarding the sufficiency of allegations. A further case management conference in the District Court is set for August 29, 2024, and the parties were directed to meet and confer regarding discovery and file a joint statement with a discovery plan prior to the conference.

The Debtor is optimistic the Insurance Coverage Litigation will proceed swiftly. At the case management conference held April 18, 2024, the District Court allowed discovery to commence, directed the parties to complete initial disclosures, and authorized the Debtor to proceed with a motion for partial summary judgment regarding the implications of the prior Clergy III settlements. The Debtor issued written discovery requests to the Insurer defendants on May 24, 2024, and is reviewing the responses received. The Debtor is also working to respond to discovery requests served by the Insurers.

On May 29, 2024, the Debtor sent separate supplemental tender letters to the Insurer defendants in the Insurance Coverage Litigation, demanding they provide a defense for certain additional claims covered by various policies issued to RCBO. Additionally, on May 30, 2024, the Debtor served separate policy limits demand letters on behalf of RCBO to all the Insurer defendants (except the California Insurance Guarantee Association ("CIGA")). These letters demanded that each Insurer indemnify RCBO in the amount of the policy limits for each applicable insurance policy, and that each Insurer respond within 30 days confirming it would do so. The Debtor has received responses, although none included agreement to indemnify the Debtor as requested and as required by the insurance policies.

# D. <u>Production of Documents to the Committee and Insurers in Support of Mediation</u>

The Debtor and the Committee have continued to engage constructively with each other regarding the exchange of information and production of documents. Counsel for the Debtor, the Debtor's financial consultants Alvarez & Marsal North America, LLC and VeraCruz Advisory, LLC, counsel for the Committee, and the Committee's financial consultant Berkeley Research Group have had continuous discussions regarding document production by the Debtor in response to the Committee's diligence efforts and extensive information requests. The Committee has made multiple statements to the Court acknowledging the Debtor's cooperation in sharing information and documents.

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 12

4859-7926-6770.4

1 | c | th | 3 | id | 4 | C | 5 | er | 6 | or | 7 | in |

The Debtor's production of documents to the Committee has been ongoing, in response to more than 180 specific requests. The Debtor has prioritized requests that the Committee professionals have identified as most important for furtherance of mediation. The Debtor also helped facilitate the Committee's informal discovery requests to certain non-debtor Catholic entities within the Diocese. This enabled the exchange of information and documents without the need for additional Rule 2004 motions or subpoenas to non-debtors. The Committee has indicated it needs time to value the Debtors' assets including real estate.

Counsel for the Debtor has also worked with counsel for the Insurers, as well as special insurance counsel for the Committee, for the purpose of moving the Chapter 11 Case forward in a constructive direction with regard to insurance coverage for sexual abuse claims. The Debtor has now produced to every Insurer documents related to abuse claims that were previously produced to the Committee. Likewise, the Debtor has provided the proofs of claim to every Insurer that has complied with the relevant confidentiality provisions of the Bar Date Order.

# E. Mediation with the Committee and Insurers

The Debtor's objective in this Chapter 11 Case is to achieve confirmation of a plan of reorganization that will (a) ensure a fair and equitable outcome for survivors of sexual abuse, and (b) allow the Debtor to stabilize its finances, continue its mission to serve the needs of the faithful within the Diocese of Oakland, and continue to provide services to underserved people and groups in the East Bay. As set forth herein, the Debtor believes it has made substantial progress toward achieving all of these goals, although mediation remains ongoing and more time is needed.

On December 19, 2023, the Debtor and the Committee jointly filed the *Joint Motion for Entry of an Order Referring Parties to Mediation, Appointing Mediators and Granting Related Relief* [Docket No. 705] (the "Mediation Motion"). On January 22, 2024, the Court entered an order referring the parties to mediation, appointing the mediators agreed by the parties, and identifying the matters for mediation, both as between the Debtor and the Committee, and between the Debtor and its Insurers [Docket No. 810] (the "Mediation Order"). The matters for mediation and the specifics of the mediation process are more fully set forth in the Mediation Order.

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

ase: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31<sup>8</sup>24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 13

1 | K | 3 | 20 | 4 | fo | 5 | to | 6 | di | 7 | C | 8 | sp | 9 | re

The Committee and the Debtor each met individually with mediators Judge Sontchi and Jeff Krivis, exchanged initial proposals, and participated in the first round of mediation on March 18 and 19, 2024. Additional mediation sessions were held on multiple dates in April, May, and June, and counsel for the Debtor and Committee held virtual one-hour meetings each week in July. The Debtor is committed to the mediation process and is optimistic about its outcome. However, there are many complex and difficult issues to work through, and the parties need more time. Further mediation sessions with the Committee are scheduled for August, September and October 2024. Although the Debtor cannot disclose specifics, the Debtor believes that progress is being made, although there is still a great deal of work remaining in order to file a plan with this Court.

The Debtor commenced mediation with the Insurers in June 2024. Debtor's counsel met independently with mediators Judge Newsome and Tim Gallagher in March to prepare for the mediation related to the Insurance Coverage Litigation. The first mediation session with both the Committee and Insurers was held in-person on June 18. All Insurers were represented at that mediation session. The parties expressed their respective positions and expectations and established a preliminary schedule for written submissions to the mediators. The Debtor and Insurers have since submitted additional information and mediation statements to the insurance mediators and anticipate that further mediation sessions will be set.

The mediation process between the Debtor and Committee, and between the Debtor, Committee and the Insurers, is a critical step toward the Debtor's goal of achieving confirmation of a plan of reorganization. It is crucial that the Debtor be given time to continue to engage in this process in the coming months without the interference, distraction and added cost to the estate of potentially competing Chapter 11 plans.

IV.

### **RELIEF REQUESTED**

By this Motion, the Debtor requests this Court enter an order, substantially in the form of the Proposed Order attached hereto as <u>Exhibit A</u>, to extend the exclusivity periods under section 1121(b) and (c)(3) of the Bankruptcy Code for a final two months, extending the Exclusive Filing Period under

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 14 of 25

1121(b) to and including Friday, November 8, 2024, and extending the Exclusive Solicitation Period under section 1121(c)(2) to and including Wednesday, January 8, 2025.

V.

#### **BASIS FOR RELIEF**

## A. 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d) Permits This Court to Extend the Debtor's Exclusivity Period

To facilitate effective reorganization in chapter 11 cases, the Bankruptcy Code grants a debtor-in-possession the initial exclusive right to file a plan and allows the Court to extend that exclusive right for cause. 11 U.S.C. § 1121. The debtor has the exclusive right to file a plan until 120 days after the date of the petition. 11 U.S.C. § 1121(b), (c)(2). If the debtor files a plan within the 120-day period, the debtor's right to exclusivity continues to 180 days after the petition to allow the debtor time to seek acceptance and confirmation of its proposed plan. 11 U.S.C. § 1121(c)(3).

These 120-day and 180-day exclusive periods to file and to seek acceptance of a plan may be extended on the request of any party in interest. 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d). The operative portion of section 1121(d) reads: "... on request of a party in interest made within the respective periods specified... and after notice and a hearing, the court may for cause reduce or increase the 120-day period or the 180-day period referred to in this section." 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d). The Court has discretion to extend the time in which the Debtor has the exclusive right to file and to seek acceptance of a plan. *See In re Henry Mayo Newhall Mem'l Hosp.*, 282 B.R. 444, 452 (B.A.P. 9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2002).

Although section 1121 provides the exclusivity period may be extended "for cause," the Bankruptcy Code does not define "cause" or provide any specific standard. The legislative history of section 1121(d), however, reflects a Congressional intent to allow a debtor to remain in control of the bankruptcy process, while recognizing the legitimate interest of creditors in the debtor's case. *See* H.R. Rep. No. 95-595, 406 (1977); S. Rep. No. 95-989, 118 (1978). Courts have further interpreted the "cause" standard of section 1121(d) as a broad standard that allows the Court "maximum flexibility to suit various types of reorganization proceedings." *In re Public Service Co. of New Hampshire*, 88 B.R. 521, 534 (Bankr. D.N.H. 1988); *see Gaines v. Perkins (In re Perkins)*, 71 B.R. 294, 297 (W.D. Tenn. 1987) ("[t]he hallmark of [§ 1121(d)] is flexibility"); *In re Borders Grp., Inc.*, 460 B.R. 818, 821–22 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y.

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 15

1 | 2011) ("The determination of cause under section 1121(d) is a fact-specific inquiry and the court has broad discretion in extending or terminating exclusivity.").

3

4

5

6

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

In exercising its broad discretion, the bankruptcy court may consider a variety of factors to assess the totality of circumstances in each case. See In re Henry Mayo Newhall, 282 B.R. at 452; In re Dow Corning Corp., 208 B.R. 661, 664 (Bankr. E.D. Mich. 1997); In re Express One Int'l, Inc., 194 B.R. 98 (Bankr. E.D. Tex. 1996). The factors which can be considered in evaluating whether to extend the exclusivity period include: (1) the size and complexity of the case; (2) the amount of time elapsed in the case; (3) the existence of good faith progress; (4) whether the debtor is paying its bills as they become due; (5) whether the debtor has demonstrated reasonable prospects of filing a viable plan; (6) the necessity of sufficient time for the debtor to negotiate a plan; (7) whether the debtor has made progress in negotiation with its creditors; (8) whether the debtor is seeking an extension in order to pressure creditors to submit to the debtor's reorganization demands; and (9) whether an unresolved contingency exists. In re Dow Corning Corp., 208 B.R. 661, 664-65 (Bankr. E.D. Mich. 1997); see also In re Express One, 194 B.R. at 100; *In re New Meatco Provisions, LLC*, No. 2:13-BK-22155-PC, 2014 WL 917335, at \*3 (Bankr. C.D. Cal. Mar. 10, 2014); In re Catholic Bishop of N. Alaska, No. F08-00110-DMD, 2009 WL 8412171, at \*1 (Bankr. D. Alaska Sept. 11, 2009); In re Adelphia Commc'ns Corp., 352 B.R. 578, 587 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 2006) (noting the nine factors listed above are "objective factors which courts historically have considered in making determinations of this character"). The Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel has held the one "transcendent" consideration is whether an extension of the exclusivity period will facilitate moving the case toward a fair and equitable resolution. In re Henry Mayo Newhall, 282 B.R. at 444, 453.

#### B. The Requested Relief Falls Within the Statutory Time Limits

The Debtor filed its petition on May 8, 2023. The Debtor's original Exclusive Filing Period ended on September 5, 2023, and its original Exclusive Solicitation Period ended on November 4, 2023. Pursuant to the Court's most recent order extending the Exclusivity Periods, entered on April 24, 2024 [Docket No. 1088], the Debtor's Exclusivity Filing Period runs through September 6, 2024, and its Exclusivity Solicitation Period runs through November 5, 2024.

28

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 16

1 2 date for the Exclusive Filing Period, and 20 months for the Exclusive Solicitation Period. See 11 U.S.C. 3 § 1121(d)(2). These outside dates are therefore November 8, 2024, for the Exclusive Filing Period, and 4 January 8, 2025, for the Exclusive Solicitation Period. The current dates are approximately two months 5 short of these limits. By this Motion, the Debtor seeks a final extension to the outside dates permitted by

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

Section 1121(d). C.

# Good Cause Exists to Extend the Debtor's Exclusivity Period

An evaluation of the factors identified above demonstrates cause for a fourth and final extension of the Exclusivity Periods. In *Henry Mayo Newhall*, exclusivity was extended in a situation involving "(1) a first extension; (2) in a complicated case; (3) that had not been pending for a long time, relative to its size and complexity; (4) in which the debtor did not appear to be proceeding in bad faith; (5) had improved operating revenues so that it was paying current expenses; (6) had shown a reasonable prospect for filing a viable plan; (7) was making satisfactory progress negotiating with key creditors; (8) did not appear to be seeking an extension of exclusivity to pressure creditors; and (9) was not depriving the Committee of material or relevant information." *In re Henry Mayo Newhall*, 282 B.R. at 452, 453 (holding the Bankruptcy Court was correct in finding cause to extend exclusivity). While this motion requests a fourth extension, there is likewise cause here.

The Bankruptcy Code limits extensions of the exclusivity period to 18 months from the petition

#### 1. Size and Complexity of the Case

It is well-established that the size and complexity of a debtor's case alone may constitute cause to extend the Exclusivity Periods. Courts have recognized "[t]he large size of a debtor and the consequent difficulty in formulating a plan . . . for a huge debtor with a complex financial structure are important factors which generally constitute cause for extending the exclusivity periods." *In re Texaco Inc.*, 76 B.R. 322, 326 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 1987). Of course, a colossal bankruptcy estate is not a prerequisite to justify an extension of the exclusivity periods based on size and complexity. See In re United Press Int'l., 60 B.R. 265, 270 (Bankr. D.D.C. 1986) (granting an extension of the exclusivity period for a \$40 million company); Gaines v. Perkins (In re Perkins), 71 B.R. 294, 296 (W.D. Tenn. 1987) (finding a case was sufficiently large to justify an extension where there were approximately 100 creditors holding 225 claims against the estate).

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 17 Doc# 1273

The size and complexity of this case continues to support an extension of exclusivity. The Debtor's Schedules list more than 570 creditors. Approximately 560 proofs of claim were filed, including 421 claims asserting the Debtor is liable for damages relating to childhood sexual abuse. Many of those claims are asserted to be of six-figure or seven-figure amounts, and many are listed as having an unknown amount. The claims related to childhood sexual abuse present unique complexities of confidentiality, valuation, procedure, and appropriate and equitable treatment of claims. Further extension of the Exclusivity Periods will allow additional time for the Debtor to continue to evaluate and value those claims with the assistance of Foley and A&M, negotiate protocols and values with the Committee in mediation, and craft a plan for satisfying all valid claims.

Adding to the complexity of this Chapter 11 Case is the Insurance Coverage Litigation. The Debtor expects the Insurance Coverage Litigation to result in significant assets becoming available to fund the estate and satisfy creditor claims. The Insurance Coverage Litigation involves issues of insurance coverage that the Debtor and its attorneys have studied for years. The Court has already addressed several of these issues in ruling on the Insurers' motions to dismiss. As set forth above, the District Court has heard the Insurer Motions to Dismiss the Debtor's Third Amended Complaint, and a fourth amended complaint is to be filed by September 12, 2024. A further case management conference has been set by the District Court for August 29, 2024. These dates are, respectively, the week after and a week before the current expiration of exclusivity. As of this filing, the District Court has not entered a scheduling order. The timing for the resolution of the Insurance Coverage Litigation is therefore unknown. While it will not be possible to resolve the Insurance Coverage Litigation through litigation before expiration of exclusivity, the Debtor believes continued progress will substantially further the likelihood of a mediated resolution and the Debtor's ability to file a successful (and hopefully consensual) plan.

The Debtor has also held a first mediation session with the Committee and Insurers and submitted confidential written deliverables to the mediators according to the schedule established at that session. It expects further mediation with the Insurers to be scheduled soon. An extension of the Exclusivity Periods is necessary to allow coverage issues to be further litigated or resolved through mediation without the added pressure of needing to file a chapter 11 plan.

ase: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 18

to the complexity of the case and resultant need for additional time to propose a plan. As described in detail in the First Day Declaration, the Debtor provides central services to the Churches serving the 82 parishes within the Diocese of Oakland, and also to the Non-Debtor Catholic Entities (as defined in the First Day Declaration) within the Diocese of Oakland. The Debtor must adhere to Canon Law in addition to its civil law obligations, a consideration secular, corporate debtors do not have. Finally, the Debtor's mission is unique in its focus: celebration of the sacraments, provision of pastoral services, performance of works of mercy, and outreach to and support of the faithful and the poor within the Diocese. These ministries are the Debtor's foundation. The Debtor requires additional time to evaluate the impact of potential plan options on these elements of its mission.

Furthermore, the nature of the Debtor, as distinct from a corporate chapter 11 debtor, contributes

# 2. <u>Amount of Time Elapsed in the Case</u>

This is the Debtor's fourth request for an extension of exclusivity, following three prior extensions of four months each. The requested relief would extend the Exclusivity Periods to the 18-month and 20-month maximums provided by the Bankruptcy Code. *See* 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d)(2)(B). In light of the size and complexity of this Chapter 11 Case, and the significant ongoing progress toward a consensual plan, including the relatively recent start of mediation with the Committee, extension of the Exclusivity Periods as allowed by the Bankruptcy Code is appropriate. This is especially true given that the requested extension is only two additional months.

#### 3. Existence of Good Faith Progress

The substantial steps the Debtor has taken to date to move this Chapter 11 Case forward are summarized in sections III.B – III.E, above. The Debtor's demonstrable good faith progress toward a confirmable plan supports an extension of the Exclusivity Periods.

#### 4. The Debtor is Paying its Post-Petition Bills as They Become Due

Since the Petition Date, the Debtor has paid its employees, vendors, utilities providers, the U.S. Trustee, and other post-petition expenses in the ordinary course of business or as otherwise provided by Court order. The Debtor has paid the administrative expenses for professional fees in the Chapter 11 Case pursuant to the interim compensation procedures order, and the orders approving two rounds of interim

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 19

4859-7926-6770.4

fee applications. The Debtor has sufficient financial resources to continue to pay its bills as they come due and will continue to do so. This factor is satisfied.

# 5. The Debtor Has Reasonable Prospects of Filing a Viable Plan

The Debtor continues to have the means and ability to propose a viable plan. The Debtor is committed to proposing a plan that is both fair and equitable to survivors of sexual abuse and allows the Debtor to continue its mission. The Debtor has retained the necessary skilled professionals and has actively engaged with the Committee. The Debtor's assets, set forth in its Schedules, support the ability of the Debtor to propose a plan that meets these objectives. Further, the Debtor filed the Insurance Coverage Litigation to obtain the benefit of the substantial insurance coverage it purchased over many decades, which is an important asset to further the Debtor's goals of compensating abuse survivors through a plan. While the Debtor is aggressively litigating the Insurance Coverage Litigation, now in District Court, and has made progress in the insurance mediation process, it will take time to either negotiate an acceptable resolution or to litigate the Insurance Coverage Litigation to judgment. Although it will in all likelihood not be possible to litigate the Insurance Coverage Litigation to judgment within the Exclusivity Periods, continued progress in that litigation will further support confirmation of a fair and equitable plan.

It remains too early to identify the terms of a plan, which are the subject of ongoing mediation. The Debtor is working to develop the structure of a plan. Given the ongoing and confidential nature of the mediation process the Debtor cannot provide any details on the anticipated structure. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt a confirmable plan can be filed. The ongoing mediation only supports the likelihood of filing a viable plan. This factor supports extension of the Exclusivity Periods. *See In re Express One*, 194 B.R. at 100 (the issue for this factor is whether there is reasonable prospect of filing viable plan).

# 6. The Necessity of Sufficient Time for the Debtor to Negotiate a Plan

The Debtor must work through a substantial number of issues, including the economic and non-economic terms of a plan, asset analysis and valuation, claims analysis and valuation, and administrative matters. Ideas are shared, vetted, debated, and adopted or withdrawn. This process takes time.

The Debtor therefore needs additional time to evaluate options and negotiate a plan through the mediation process. Given the complexity and difficulty of the issues to be addressed in mediation, the

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 20

Debtor needs the additional time requested herein to engage in the ongoing mediation with the Committee without the specter of competing plans.

Additionally, the Insurance Coverage Litigation is an important potential source for creditor recoveries but still remains in the pleading stages despite the Debtor's diligent efforts to press forward. Extending the Exclusivity Periods will allow the Insurance Coverage Litigation to extend past the pleading stage and move closer to its ultimate conclusion before a plan must be filed, increasing the likelihood of a negotiated resolution with the Insurers.

The Debtor is actively pursuing both the Insurance Coverage Litigation and mediation with the Committee and Insurers. However, it is not realistic to expect either a settlement or judgment to occur during the current Exclusive Filing Period. The Debtor needs and should receive additional time to negotiate with the Committee and Insurers regarding formulation of a plan.

## 7. The Debtor Has Made Progress in Negotiations with its Creditors

Since the Committee was appointed and retained counsel, the Debtor and its advisors have been in regular contact with Committee counsel on all material matters. Significantly, the Debtor and the Committee negotiated an agreement on the issues presented in the Bar Date Motion and jointly supported the entry of the order approving that motion and the establishment of the Bar Date. This allowed for a Bar Date of approximately four months after the Petition Date, which materially advanced the progress of this Chapter 11 Case.

The Debtor's and Committee's respective professionals have also been working collaboratively on discovery matters. In connection with entry of the Stipulated Protective Order, the Debtor has produced thousands of documents to the Committee. As a direct result of the level of cooperation provided by the Debtor, the Committee withdrew its Rule 2004 motion for examination of the Debtor, and has repeatedly recognized and landed the cooperation it has received from the Debtor.

On the essential issue of progress in negotiation regarding terms of a plan, the Debtor has made substantial steps in negotiating certain issues with the Committee. The Debtor and Committee agreed on the selection of two mediators to jointly mediate matters between the Debtor and the Committee as they work toward a consensual plan of reorganization, and as described above are actively engaging in that mediation process, having held multiple mediation sessions. While the details of the mediation are FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 21

2 | 3 |

confidential, the Debtor believes progress has been made. This supports an extension of the Debtor's exclusivity. *See In re Dow Corning Corp.*, 208 B.R. at 665 (active involvement in negotiation supports extending exclusivity).

# 8. <u>The Debtor is Not Seeking an Extension to Pressure Creditors</u>

There cannot be any reasonable contention the Debtor's request for an extension is for the purpose of pressuring creditors. There have been no major disputes with creditors in the Chapter 11 Case, and the Debtor has cooperated with the Committee on numerous issues throughout the case to date. Further, the Debtor is actively participating in mediation with the Committee. The Debtor is not abusing the exclusivity period and should be permitted to maintain exclusivity as contemplated by the Bankruptcy Code. The Debtor believes the Committee supports this Motion.

# 9. <u>Unresolved Contingencies</u>

Generally speaking, the types of unresolved contingencies in question are external to a bankruptcy case. See In re Dow Corning Corp., 208 B.R. at 666. Here, the Debtor's key assets essential to a plan include is its portfolio of insurance policies from which it will pursue coverage to help compensate abuse survivors. The Debtor has maintained insurance coverage through a series of primary, excess, and umbrella insurers from the early 1960s through the present and has worked to identify and preserve insurance policies in effect when clergy sexual abuse allegedly occurred. To address coverage issues regarding abuse claims, the Debtor filed the Insurance Coverage Litigation. Resolution of the issues raised in the Insurance Coverage Litigation is a significant contingency affecting proposal of a plan. The Debtor is diligently pursuing resolution of the Insurance Coverage Litigation through a dual-track approach of litigation and mediation, although progress in the litigation has been substantially delayed by the insurers' motions to dismiss. This factor also supports the extension of exclusivity.

# D. The Requested Extension Will Facilitate Moving the Case Forward

The factors discussed above all relate to the "transcendent consideration" of whether extending exclusivity will facilitate moving the case forward toward a fair and equitable resolution. *See In re Henry Mayo*, 282 B.R. at 453. Here, there is no question that extending the Exclusivity Periods will do that. The Debtor has set the groundwork for proposing a plan of reorganization. It is in mediation with the Committee regarding the terms of a plan and with its Insurers regarding the Insurance Mediation Matters FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 22

as described in the order appointing the mediators. The relief requested will allow the Debtor reasonable time to continue to progress toward filing a plan of reorganization (hopefully, consensual) while remaining protected from the pressure of a plan-filing deadline or the risk of interference of competing plans, as contemplated by the Bankruptcy Code. *See In re Homestead Partners, Ltd.*, 197 B.R. 706, 719 (Bankr. N.D. Ga., 1996) ("[t]he debtor's exclusive opportunity at plan formulation is a key element in the delicate balance struck by Congress to encourage the consensual development of reorganization plans.").

While the Debtor could simply formulate and present a plan on its own, it is highly preferable to first seek consensus with other parties, as has been the Debtor's position throughout this Chapter 11 Case. This requires additional time for negotiation, and in particular for the pending mediations to play out, before filing a plan. The Debtor does not believe it is productive or appropriate for other parties to file competing plans before it has had a reasonable opportunity to see out the mediation process and develop and propose its own plan, hopefully through on consensual basis as a result of mediation.

There is every reason to believe extending the Exclusivity Periods to allow for negotiation and mediation among the major parties will move the case toward a positive conclusion in which the Debtor can reorganize and provide meaningful relief to its creditors. The requested extension of exclusivity is therefore consistent with the purpose of section 1121. *See In re Lionel Corp.*, 722 F.2d at 1071; *Homestead Partners, Ltd.*, 197 B.R. at 719.

VI.

#### **RESERVATION OF RIGHTS**

Nothing contained in this Motion is intended to be or shall be construed as (i) an admission as to the validity of any claim against the Debtor, (ii) a waiver of the Debtor's or any appropriate party in interest's rights to dispute any claim, or (iii) an approval or assumption of any agreement, contract, program, policy, or lease under section 365 of the Bankruptcy Code.

Nothing contained in this Motion is intended to be or shall be construed as a waiver of any of the Debtor's rights under any applicable law, including, without limitation, the Code of Canon law, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of California, California Corporations Code §§ 10000-10015, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000bb-2000bb-4), the church autonomy doctrine, charitable trust law, California trust law, and the FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31<mark>/</mark>24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 2

4859-7926-6770.4

of 25

1	Debtor's rights under any insurance policies and to proceeds thereof, and to object to disclosure of		
2	nformation and contend certain assets discussed in this Motion are not property of the estate.		
3	3 VII.	VII.	
4	4 NOTICE		
5	Notice of this Motion is being provided to the Core Service List pursuant	to the Court's Final	
6	6 Order Authorizing and Approving Special Noticing and Confidentiality Procedures	[Docket No. 292] (the	
7	"Noticing Order"). Pursuant to the Noticing Order, no further notice is required.		
8	VIII.		
9	9 CONCLUSION		
10	WHEREFORE, the Debtor requests the Court enter an order, substantially in the form of the		
11	Proposed Order, extending the Exclusivity Periods and granting related relief.		
12	DATED: July 31, 2024 FOLEY & LARDNER LLP		
13	Jeffrey R. Blease Thomas F. Carlucci		
14	Shane J. Moses Emil P. Khatchatourian		
15	Ann Marie Uetz Matthew D. Lee		
16	757 Street 9. 1710565		
17	Shane J. Moses		
18	Counsel for the Debtor and Debtor in Possession		
19	19		
20	20		
21	21		
22	22		
23	23		
24	24		
25	25		
26	26		
27	27		
28	28		
	FOURTH MOTION TO EX	CTEND EXCLUSIVITY	

4859-7926-6770.4

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 24 of 25

FOURTH MOTION TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVITY

Doc# 1273 Filed: 07/31/24 of 25 Case: 23-40523 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 25

4859-7926-6770.4

# **EXHIBIT A**

of 4

1 2	FOLEY & LARDNER LLP Jeffrey R. Blease (CA Bar. No. 134933) Tel: (617) 226-3155; jblease@foley.com Thomas F. Carlucci (CA Bar No. 135767)			
3	Thomas F. Carlucci (CA Bar No. 135/6/) Tel: (415) 984-9824; tcarlucci@foley.com Shane J. Moses (CA Bar No. 250533) Tel: (415) 438-6404; smoses@foley.com Emil P. Khatchatourian (CA Bar No. 265290) Tel: (312) 832-5156; ekhatchatourian@foley.com Ann Marie Uetz (admitted pro hac vice) Tel: (313) 234-7114; auetz@foley.com Matthew D. Lee (admitted pro hac vice) Tel: (608) 258-4203; mdlee@foley.com 555 California Street, Suite 1700			
4				
5				
6				
7				
8	San Francisco, CA 94104-1520			
9	Counsel for the Debtor and Debtor in Possession			
10 11	LINUTED STATES DANKDURTSV COLIDE			
12	UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA			
13	OAKLAND DIVISION			
14	In re:	Case No. 23-40523 WJL		
15	THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF	Chapter 11		
16	OAKLAND, a California corporation sole,	[PROPOSED] FOURTH ORDER		
17	Debtor.	EXTENDING EXCLUSIVE PERIODS FOR THE DEBTOR TO FILE AND SOLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF A CHAPTER 11 PLAN		
18		Judge: Hon. William J. Lafferty		
19				
20				
21 22	Upon the Debtor's Fourth Motion for Orde	er Extending Exclusive Periods For The Debtor To File		
23	and Solicit Acceptance of a Chapter 11 Plan, dated July 31, 2024 [Docket No] (the "Motion"),1			
24	filed by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland, a California corporation sole, and the debtor and debtor			
25	in possession (the "Debtor") in the above-captioned chapter 11 bankruptcy case (the "Chapter 11 Case"),			
26	for entry of an order pursuant to section 1121(d) of the Bankruptcy Code extending the exclusive periods			
27	during which only the Debtor may file and solicit acceptance of a chapter 11 plan as provided in sections			
28	Conitalized terms used but not defined bearing shall be seen	na magnings asseribed to them in the Metion		
	Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273-1 Filed: 07/31			
	4883-0869-5763.1	_		

1121(b) and (c)(3) of the Bankruptcy Code; the Court having reviewed and considered the Motion, the Bardos Declaration in support thereof, and all other filings in support of or opposition to the Motion; the Court finding it has jurisdiction over this matter, venue in this Court is proper, and notice of the Motion was reasonable and is sufficient under the circumstances; and the Court finding the relief requested in the Motion is in the best interests of the Debtor, its creditors, and other parties in interest; and after due deliberation and good cause appearing therefor,

#### IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

- 1. The Motion is granted as set forth herein.
- 2. Pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d), the Exclusive Filing Period during which the Debtor has the exclusive right to file a chapter 11 plan, as provided in 11 U.S.C. § 1121(b) and (c)(2), is hereby extended to November 8, 2024.
- 3. Pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1121(d), the Exclusive Solicitation Period during which the Debtor has the exclusive right to solicit acceptance of a chapter 11 plan, as provided in 11 U.S.C. § 1121(c)(3), is hereby extended to January 8, 2025.
- 4. This Court shall retain jurisdiction with respect to all matters arising from or related to the implementation of or interpretation of this Order.

\*\*\* END OF ORDER \*\*\*

FOURTH ORDER EXTENDING EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273-1 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 3 of 4

4883-0869-5763.1

# **COURT SERVICE LIST**

All ECF Recipients.

FOURTH ORDER EXTENDING EXCLUSIVITY

Case: 23-40523 Doc# 1273-1 Filed: 07/31/24 Entered: 07/31/24 15:25:16 Page 4 of 4

4883-0869-5763.1