

HON. LEO S. PAPAS &
HON. LOUISE DECARL ADLER
Trial Judges of the Year

While I continue to have the highest regard for our state court and the judges who have been so instrumental in resolving over 800 such cases, I bow to the wisdom of Judge Adler in how she handled this bankruptcy proceeding. She immediately understood what needed to be done to accomplish a fair and prompt resolution of the great divide between the "debtor" and its sex abuse "creditors". In particular, I commend her decision to refer the San Diego cases to Magistrate Judge Leo S. Papas for mediation.

I have been a litigator for almost 30 years and have tried cases in federal and state courts around the country. Over the years I have met many judges in a variety of contexts, but rarely have I met a judge with the judicial temperament, kindness, courtesy and professionalism of Judge Papas. It is difficult for anyone to understand the depth and complexity of the emotions involved in these clergy sex abuse cases, let alone agree to attempt to obtain a settlement in 90 days with the myriad of issues presented by bankruptcy laws and procedures. Judge Papas undertook that challenge with less than a prayer of hope from me that he could get it done. Again, I was proven wrong.

On behalf of all of the sex abuse victims whose fate was placed in the hands of our federal judiciary against their will, I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our federal court, especially to Judge Adler and Judge Papas for proving me so wrong. If there is a process by which judges are given special recognition among their peers on the federal bench, I would like to nominate both the Honorable Louise DeCarl Adler, and the Honorable Leo S. Papas for such special recognition.

- Irwin M. Zalkin