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Archdiocese of Santa Fe tries to shed property to collect funds for settlement

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The Archdiocese of Santa Fe's intent to sell hundreds of its properties will pick up speed in the coming months.

The archdiocese, which already has sold at least six properties over the past year and intends to sell 732 more by late July, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2018 as it faced a clergy sex abuse scandal. Nearly 400 people filed claims of abuse.

Court records show the archdiocese since August has asked the bankruptcy judge for the right to sell properties in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Raton, Sandia Park and Edgewood. The transactions reaped \$7.5 million, with most of that coming from the sale of a large portion of the Carmelite Monastery complex in Santa Fe.

The archdiocese also hired an auctioneer, SVN Auction Services of Florida, to sell 732 properties by July 21. Most are vacant lots of a couple of acres or smaller and were donated to the church by families.

SVN agreed to accept a marketing and sales budget of \$62,730 in the online auction. Marketing is expected to start this month.

Records show more than 260 properties are in Valencia County, most listed in the subdivisions of Rio Grande Estates and Rio Del Toro.

Close to 120 of the properties are in Sandoval County, almost all listed in the Rio Rancho Estates subdivision.

Santa Fe County has 13 listed, and Bernalillo County has eight.

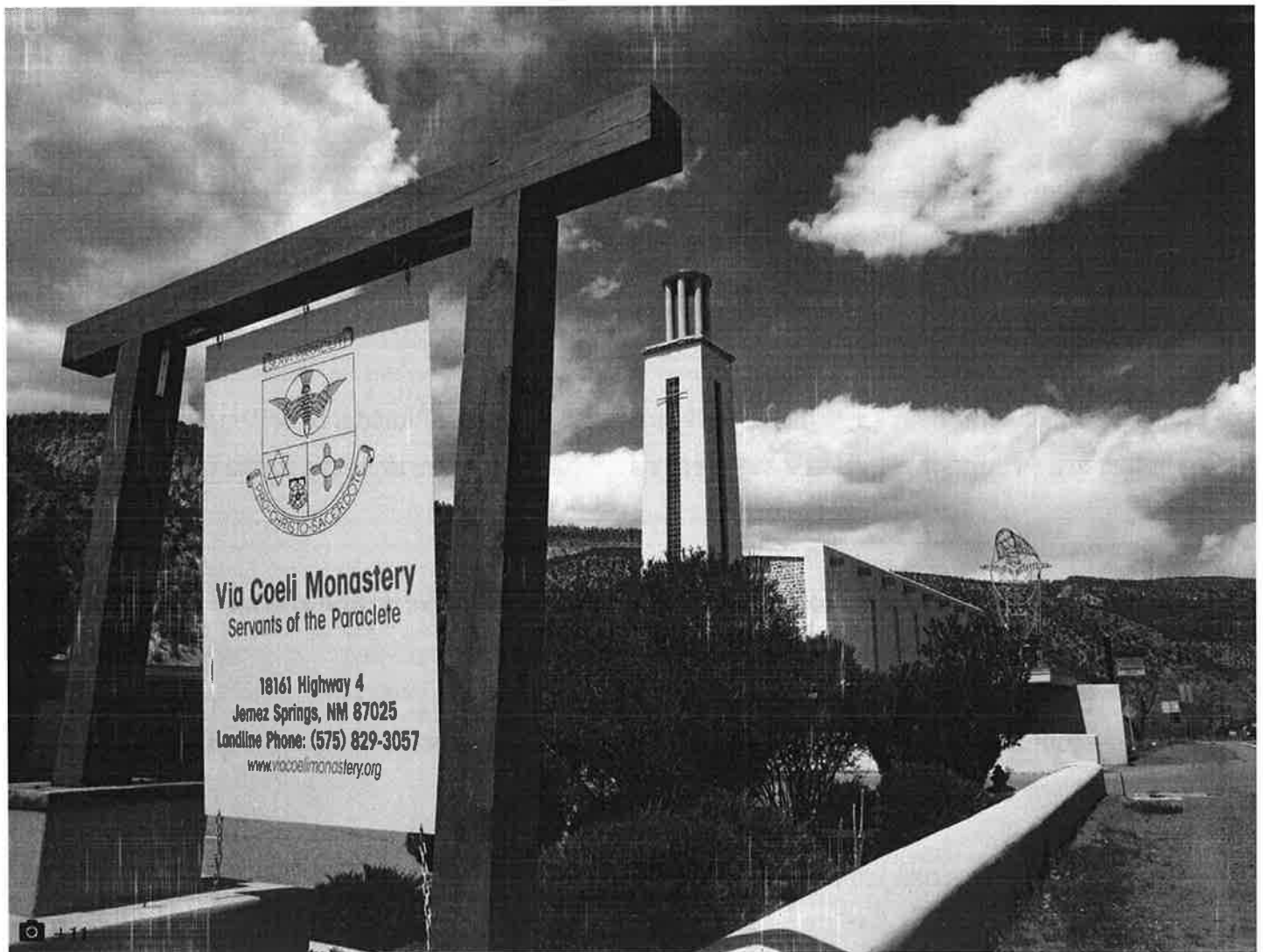
The properties show ownership by the archdiocese or parishes within the various counties. They tend to be described simply as vacant lots, but some give a bit more detail, such as “agriculture field,” “grazing land,” “plaza or community area across from church” and “old church site, church was razed, now vacant.”

SVN will receive a commission of 8 percent to 10 percent, depending on if a buyer uses a broker.

The plaintiffs have complained the archdiocese transferred properties to 93 parishes with the intention of hindering their access to them. So far, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge David T. Thuma has allowed that contention to move forward over the archdiocese’s objections.

Thuma has said those properties could be worth more than \$150 million.

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