



Cardenal Pedro Barreto Jimeno, S.J.

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SCHLICHTER & BOGARD LAW FIRM

**Jerry Schlichter, Kristine Kraft, Nathan Stump, Cort VanOstran, Jason Kempf, Rachel Berger, Chris Collum, Amy Ritter, Linda Wooten, Yoana Zamora Miranda
St. Louis, Missouri**

Subject: Recognition and gratitude for 19 years of unwavering legal advocacy on behalf of 1,373 children from La Oroya.

Dear friends:

The Schlichter & Bogard law firm is recognized across the United States for seeking justice for those harmed by wrongful acts. Now, that recognition and gratitude extends to the city of La Oroya, in the Junín Region of Peru.

We write to express our admiration and respect for your commendable professional work. After nearly two decades of a historic legal battle in U.S. federal courts, you successfully advocated for the 1,373 Peruvian children affected by severe environmental pollution from the polymetallic smelter in La Oroya.

Reflecting on these nineteen years of litigation, you demonstrated that patience and perseverance in the truth lead to the achievement of one's goal. Perhaps without even realizing it, you put into practice the Word of God: "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" (Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians 6:9). This biblical passage aptly summarizes the success achieved by you—highly esteemed Mr. Jerry Schlichter—along with your wife and your distinguished team.

When this process began, I witnessed members of your law firm visiting the city of La Oroya to inform the local population about the lawsuit. The outlook was bleak. You had to confront a group of agitated workers as well as a corporate giant—Doe Run Peru and its parent company, The Renco Group Inc., led by billionaire Ira Rennert. In that difficult context, you took on a challenge that few would have dared to undertake or see through with such steadfastness over time. You served as a shield for children who were suffering in silence the ravages of lead, arsenic, and cadmium.



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Together with Pastor Ellie Stock (San Luis) and Pastor Hunter Farrell (La Oroya)—representing the Presbyterian Church—as well as the Evangelical Church and the Catholic Archdiocese of Huancayo, they shared in the suffering of the people of La Oroya. Consequently, they requested that Saint Louis University (Missouri) conduct blood tests on the children in August 2005. The scientific evidence, combined with an impeccable legal strategy, compelled the defendants to reach an out-of-court settlement.

This success is the fruit of the integration of faith, science, and legal truth, strengthening the hope for a just and fraternal humanity. It is also a timely and urgent call to States, society, global corporations, and faith communities to "protect the dignity of every person, promote justice, and make fraternity possible" (Leo XIV – Encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* No. 1, May 15, 2026).

Following our pleasant meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, I informed the Holy Father, Leo XIV, about the long legal process and the historic out-of-court settlement. His response was as follows:

"Dear Pedro:

I am writing to thank you for the information and—as soon as possible—to congratulate everyone who has worked on behalf of the population of La Oroya, especially the children, who have been so deeply affected by the environmental destruction in their area.

I have received news of the out-of-court settlement with Doe Run in the U.S. It is a significant step forward—achieved after years of work. My thanks go to you and to everyone who made this outcome possible." León XIV

God bless each and every one of you at the Schlichter & Bogard law firm in St. Louis, Missouri.

Cardinal Pedro Ricardo Barreto Jimeno, S.J.
Archbishop Emeritus of Huancayo, Peru
Email: pebaji44@gmail.com
Mobile phone: +51 964910266