



Roman Catholic Women Priests

Bishops Respond to the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Findings

26 August 2018

We, the undersigned international circle of Bishops representing the Roman Catholic Women Priests movement, state the following:

- We thank the Pennsylvania State's Attorney for doing the work the Roman Catholic Bishops have failed to do and for disclosing the criminal conduct of hundreds of Roman Catholic priests and an estimated thousand child victims.
- We condemn the conduct of priest sex offenders. We condemn the conduct of Bishops who conspired to cover up the criminal conduct of priest sex offenders and expanded the number of child victims by transferring offending clergy to new assignments. We condemn the conduct of Bishops who failed to report clergy accused of sexual crimes to local law enforcement agencies for investigation and possible prosecution. We condemn the conduct of Bishops who themselves engaged in sex offenses with minor victims. We condemn the conduct of all clergy, priests and bishops, who engaged in the sexual harassment of adult women and/or men.
- We believe the *structure* of priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church is bankrupt and corrupt and must be completely restructured.

We call upon the U.S. Bishops to tender their resignations as bishops subject to the acceptance or rejection of Pope Francis.

- We call upon Pope Francis to establish a lay led ecumenical council to explore new structures for church leadership and church order, including:

1. the ordination of married men, women, and people of all genders;
2. the normalization of LGBTQ relationships and same sex marriage;
3. the establishment of a process for participation of local laity in the selection/election of their bishops;
4. the establishment of lay representation by 2/3 in all ecumenical councils for purposes of developing and setting Roman Catholic theology, policy, self-understanding and practice.

We are aware that this sexual abuse crisis is a worldwide crisis, occurring on every continent where the Roman Catholic Church has a presence. This crisis dramatically affects all of God's people.

Healing and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church can only begin after a serious accounting of its hierarchy. A recall of the current, collective leadership and a non-hierarchical restructuring of the Church is imperative in order to heal the grave wounds to the body of Christ and move the Church into the 21st century.

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