
Statement on the Sexual Abuse Scandal

In light of the recent findings of widespread sexual abuse at some of the highest echelons of the church, we feel compelled to speak at this moment of suffering and despair.

First, we stand in solidarity with the victims and are heartily sorry for the pain they have suffered and continue to endure.

Second, we recognize the hurt, anger, and impatience that those who truly love the church are feeling regarding this prevailing evil.

Third, we also recognize the challenge each new accusation brings to our mission and ministries as a church and as promoters of vocations.

No words of apology will ever be adequate. But there are measures and actions that we can take, should take, and in some cases, have taken.

- We must hold perpetrators and those complicit in the crimes accountable.
- We must tend to the victims, offering them hope and healing and our prayers.
- We must strengthen, adopt, and adhere consistently to safeguards and protocols outlined by our institutes and the wider church to protect the vulnerable and provide supervision and transparency.
- We must adequately assess and screen candidates to religious life and holy orders.
- We must train and offer ongoing formation to vocation directors and other leaders in religious life to ensure that religious communities admit only healthy and integrated adults and address those already in the community who may not be.

As an organization of women and men religious, we commit to advocating on behalf of the victims and for the sake of the future of religious life and the church by standing against a culture of indifference and silence. We commit to a renewed effort to shape a culture of accountability and transparency starting with ourselves and our own religious institutes. We promise our sincerest prayers for healing and wholeness for those who have been victimized. And above all, we embrace the hope of our faith that “we possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable” ... that through all our efforts, together as one church – lay, religious and clergy – we can serve as “a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises” (2 Peter 1:19).

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