



#ItalyChurchToo
COORDINAMENTO CONTRO GLI ABUSI NELLA CHIESA CATTOLICA

www.italychurchtoo.it
italychurchtoo@retelabusio.org

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00 A.M. MONDAY, MAY 23.

S. Em. Card. Gualtiero Bassetti, president of the Italian Bishops' Conference.
Members all of the CEI

and FYI

S. Em. Card. Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of His Holiness

S. Em. Card. Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, S.I., Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith

S. E. Msgr. Lazarus You Heung Sik, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Clergy

S. Em. Card. Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops

Eminence,
Eminences and Excellencies,

we are women and men diverse in sensibility and belonging, believers and non-believers.
We write to you first of all as citizens, since the Church is part of society and not outside of it.
We are moved by a spirit of truth, of justice, of responsibility that makes us stand before you today, standing, in conscience, with frankness.

Abuses perpetrated within the Church affect people in their bodies, in their lives, in their conscience: they are violations of human rights. If the Church does not respect human rights, it cannot preach the Gospel. That is why obedience to the Gospel can push us to "disobedience" whenever in the name of "prudence" we risk becoming accomplices to crimes.

This letter is addressed to you, but made public so that others may subscribe to our request and so that publicly you may respond (italychurchtoo@pec.it). We will give an account of your response at the press conference we will hold on May 27 at 11 a.m. at the Foreign Press Association in Rome.

WE DEMAND TRUTH, JUSTICE AND PREVENTION

As the "Consortium against Abuse in the Catholic Church - ItalyChurchToo," an expression of victims of abuse, the Catholic laity, instances of interreligious dialogue, citizenship and some sensitive media, we ask you bishops for truth and justice for the victims of abuse - minors, adults, vulnerable people, religious - perpetrated by people in various capacities involved in the Church, as well as preventive measures so that the Church regains credibility and authority. Aware that some aspects we will mention will be the subject of the synodal discussion, we want to focus, here and now, on the Italian reality.



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A) FROM A TRUTH PERSPECTIVE

1) We ask for the full cooperation of the Italian Church in an independent investigation, conducted by credible and super partes professionals, that sheds light on the abuses carried out by clergy in Italy, that sees the efforts of different and very high professionalities united and that uses qualitative, quantitative and documentary methods at the same time; in this perspective, we reject in advance any hypothesis of work carried out with tools and resources internal to the Church itself, which would not have the necessary characteristics of third party and would be non-credible, deficient and ultimately useless, if not harmful.

2) We ask that the archives of dioceses, convents, monasteries, parishes, pastoral centers, and Catholic educational and scholastic institutions be opened and made available; that channels of effective collaboration be put in place with the institutions of the Italian state so that those guilty of crimes against minors are prosecuted. We are not willing to welcome synergies with state institutions that do not contemplate a serious investigation of the past, direct involvement of victims and reparation commensurate with the harm done. It is necessary that direct personal responsibility, as well as omissions and undue cover-ups, that cause a re-victimization of victims, be ascertained and disclosed, at all levels, for the purpose of proper accountability for the consequences of one's actions, to which we are all called.

3) We call for addressing the critical issue of the lack of tertiary nature of existing diocesan listening centers, elaborating an alternative proposal that offers neutral and competent professional figures, to make the collection of stories and testimonies less psychologically burdensome, easier, and more rigorous.

B) FROM A JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

4) We call for victims and their families to be heard, welcomed and compensated, including financially, for the biological, psychological, moral and economic damages they have suffered, even knowing that nothing can ever compensate for the suffering they have endured. We ask moreover, that paths of accountability of offenders before victims be contemplated at the same time, with a view to restorative justice.

5) We ask for the strict application of the norms established by Pope Francis, in particular contained in the motu proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*, which first and foremost defines the moral and legal obligation to report abuse against minors and vulnerable persons, or against any person, with violence, threats or abuse of authority.

6) We ask that you promote the elimination of the statute of limitations for abuse, as is already happening in other countries: the maturation of the awareness of abuse requires from the victims, as is now attested even in scientific circles, very long times that fatally, today, make the majority of reports prescribed.

C) FROM A PREVENTION PERSPECTIVE:

Aware that the sphere of abuse prevention, direct and indirect, implies issues of very wide scope -



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including formation for ordained ministry, a psycho-affective education of seminarians and candidates to religious life, a rethinking of the dynamics of pastoral care - which require very long time for reflection, in the context of this letter:

7) we ask to extend also to clergy and volunteers active in the Church the mandatory anti-pedophilia certificate, provided for by the Lanzarote Convention, adopted by the Council of Europe and ratified by the Italian government, in order to restore greater transparency to ecclesiastical institutions.

These requests are intended to bring the work of the Italian Church into line with that of other bishops' conferences and individual dioceses, and to sweep away any doubts regarding reticence the Italian episcopate may have regarding the emergence of the true extent of the phenomenon in Italy.

As citizens, victims of abuse, baptized and baptized, mothers, fathers, educators, professionals, we need to see the Italian Church compactly oriented to an operation without shadows and without discounts.

In the certainty of your attention

Coordinamento ItalyChurchToo

First signatories:

Francesco Zanardi - Rete L'Abuso - ECA

Mario Caligiuri - lawyer - Rete L'Abuso

Cristina Balestrini – Sezione Vittime e famiglie Rete L'Abuso

Beppe Pavan – Comunità cristiane di base

Paola Lazzarini – Donne per la Chiesa

Giovanna Bianchi - Donne per la Chiesa

Agnès Théry - Donne per la Chiesa

Michelangelo Ventura - We are Church Italy

Vittorio Bellavite - We are Church Italy

Angelo Cifatte - We are Church Italy

Paola Cavallari – Osservatorio Interreligioso sulle violenze contro le donne - OIVD

Clelia Degli Esposti - OIVD

Marzia Benazzi - OIVD

Piera Baldelli - OIVD

Maria Teresa Milano - OIVD

Marco Campedelli - theologian and storyteller - OIVD

Paolo Cugini - presbyter and theologian - OIVD

Doretta Baccarini - OIVD

Ludovica Eugenio - journalist - ADISTA

Eletta Cucuzza - journalist - ADISTA

Giampaolo Petrucci - journalist - ADISTA

Ivana Santomo – Associazione Officina Adista

Federico Tulli - journalist – LEFT

Federica Tourn - independent journalist



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Comité de la Jupe

Chantal Götz - Voices of Faith

Lorita Tinelli - president Centro Studi Abusi Psicologici (CeSAP)

Luigi Corvaglia - CeSAP - director European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Cults and Sects - FECRIS

The Members of the Otganizzazione internazionale Ex-Focolari - OREF

Carlo Bolpin - president Associazione Esodo

Giuseppe Deiana – Associazione Puecher

Emanuela Provera - Opus Dei numerary from 1986 to 2000

Renata Patti - internal member of the Focolare Movement from 1967 to 2008

Giuseppe Lenzi

Piero Cappelli - journalist and writer

Francesco Antonioli - journalist

Federica Roselli - lawyer

Maria Armida Nicolaci - biblical scholar

Mauro Concilio - educator

Laura Verrani - theologian

Ugo Gianni Rosenberg - baccalaureate in theology

Roberto Fiorini - editor-in-chief of the magazine PretiOperai

Antonietta Potente - Dominican religious and theologian

Mauro Castagnaro - journalist

Francesco Peloso - journalist

Giorgio Saglietti – Tempi di Fraternità

Franco Barbero - biblical scholar and theologian

Giulia Lo Porto - biblical scholar

Rome, May 16, 2022