



30 December 2018

## FORMER PAPAL ABUSE COMMISSIONERS WANT RE-EVALUATION OF GROUP

## NOTICES



3 former members of Pope Francis' commission on clergy sexual abuse are calling on the pontiff's February Vatican summit on child protection to reevaluate the structure of the group in order to make it more effective in pursuing policy reforms. In

### Money Matters

#### Sunday 16 December 2018

Thank you for your contributions to our collections over the Christmas period. Details next week.



### Remembered at Mass

Sat 6pm: Sarsfield Family, Darren McDonagh

Sun 11.30am: Kathleen Oglesby, Josephine & John Boylan

### Recently Deceased

Mary (May Daly), Funeral Monday 31st December at 10am.

separate NCR interviews, the former papal advisors emphasized the need for the commission to reassert its independence from the Vatican's bureaucracy, to oversee implementation of its own recommendations, and to meet regularly with Francis. Several outside experts with long histories in confronting clergy abuse echoed their concerns, and highlighted a lack of clarity and transparency over the purpose and objectives of the now four-year-old group. Marie Collins, an Irish abuse survivor who resigned from the commission in 2017, said the role of the commission might merit special discussion at the February summit because the frustrations over its work exemplify how the Catholic Church has struggled for decades to address the abuse crisis. "The commission itself is sort of a microcosm of the global issue ... that work that's being done doesn't seem to produce results," she said. "We need clarity now about the commission, its purpose, its powers, its future, and exactly where it is going and what we can expect from it," said Collins, who left the group in mid-2017 due to frustration with Vatican officials. "People put a lot of hope into it, and it has failed to live up to the hope," she added. "There should be some examination as to why." Krysten Winter-Green, one of six commission members not reappointed by Francis in early 2018 after the end of the group's first three-year term, said she doubted the summit would have the role of the commission on its agenda, but added: "As far as I am concerned, it really should be." "From inception, the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors has been fraught with critical issues that have impeded progress," said Winter-Green, a New Zealander who lives in the U.S. and provides consulting services to dioceses and religious congregations.

Catherine Bonnet, another of the six members not reappointed in 2018, stressed the need for Francis to begin meeting with the commission more regularly, so he can ask them directly about their proposals. "He never came to one of our meetings," she said, referring to her three years on the group. "If the commission is only writing reports to Pope Francis ... it's not enough," said Bonnet, who is respected across Europe for her research on perinatal violence. "You need a debate and an explanation of why we suggest this." Francis announced the child protection summit in September, saying that he would host a meeting in Rome on the issue with all of the presidents of the world's various conferences of Catholic bishops from Feb. 21 to 24. Expectations for the event have been high, especially after the leadership of the U.S. bishops' conference announced in November that it had been asked by the Vatican to delay voting on a set of proposals to address clergy abuse because of the summit. The pope has entrusted the organization of the gathering to four men: Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich, Indian Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna, and Jesuit Fr. Hans Zollner, a current member of the papal commission and president of the Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University. The organizing committee said in a Dec. 18 note that the meeting would address three broad areas of "responsibility, accountability and transparency," but did not identify specific issues, such as the commission, that might be covered under that wide umbrella. But Boston Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the president of the papal commission, has said the group will be involved in preparing the meeting. Zollner's presence on the organizing committee for the summit may point to one question raised by Collins and Winter-Green: whether the group has shifted away from its original construction as a policy change body to an educational one. They both mentioned the mixing of the work of the commission and Zollner's Centre for Child Protection, an academic institute founded in 2012. "I think at this point the pontifical commission seems to have completely lost its way," said Collins. "Originally ... we were told it was set up to recommend policies for structural change," she said. "It's now become a quasi-educational

body, which is really a parallel group running alongside the [Centre for Child Protection, or CCP] – doing much the same work." "Basically, it's seeing itself as a body which should be promoting education within the church on abuse," Collins added. "We already have that in the CCP, and we don't need a second body doing it." Winter-Green noted an apparent difference in approach between the commission's Vatican-approved statutes and a Nov. 23 statement by O'Malley. The statutes make clear that the group's role is to "propose initiatives to the Roman Pontiff ... for the purposes of promoting local responsibility in the particular Churches for the protection of all minors and vulnerable adults." O'Malley's statement said the commission is meant to be "making recommendations on best practices for the universal Church for education and prevention programs." "This press release appears to intimate that the original role and purpose of the [commission] has shifted from 'policy change' to 'education,'" said Winter-Green, adding that the Vatican had failed to "clearly enunciate the unique identity" of the papal commission as compared to the Gregorian center.

Two outside experts who have advised bishops for years on how to confront clergy abuse concurred

with the former commission members that the group should come under reevaluation during the February summit. Francis Sullivan, who led the Australian church's response to a 2013-17 national inquiry into institutional responses to child abuse, said the "first thing" the bishops at the summit should do is "put in place a truly independent commission." Sullivan, the former chief executive of Australia's Truth, Justice and Healing Council, said the commission should be refashioned so that it is led by a layperson, meets personally with the pope, and has a guaranteed budget to do its work. Referencing the need for a lay chairperson, he said: "It has to be a lay person, someone whose career is not riding on the performance [of the commission] in the curia." Kathleen McChesney, a former FBI executive assistant director who left the agency in 2002 to lead the U.S. bishops' then-new child protection office, said she thought it was "necessary" for the summit to discuss the papal commission. McChesney, who also co-chaired the National Advisory Council of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men from 2014 to 2017, suggested the summit could ask to hear from O'Malley about "what's working and what's not working." "I don't think a lot of people really understand that it's there or understand what it does," she said. "Some think it's supposed to be for oversight. Some think it's just people that give good ideas to the pope." "There are some misimpressions," said McChesney. "I think maybe the answer to that would be they need to correct the misimpressions about what it's intended to do, and evaluate ... its structure, its mandate, where it needs to go, how it should be staffed."

[Full Article here](#)



## **FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY**

### **A reading from the Book of Samuel**

The In those days Hannah conceived, and at the end of her term bore a son whom she called Samuel, since she had asked the LORD for him. The next time her husband Elkanah was going up with the rest of his household to offer the customary sacrifice to the LORD and to fulfill his vows, Hannah did not go, explaining to her husband, "Once the child is weaned, I will take him to appear before the LORD and to remain there forever; I will offer him as a perpetual nazirite." Once Samuel was weaned, Hannah brought him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and presented him at the temple of the LORD in Shiloh. After the boy's father had sacrificed the young bull, Hannah, his mother, approached Eli and said: "Pardon, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood near you here, praying to the LORD. I prayed for this child, and the LORD granted my request. Now I, in turn, give him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he shall be dedicated to the LORD." Hannah left Samuel there.

**This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 84**

**Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord**

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!  
My soul yearns and pines for the courts of the LORD.  
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.R/

Happy they who dwell in your house! Continually they praise you. Happy the people whose strength you are!  
Their hearts are set upon the pilgrimage. R/

O LORD of hosts, hear our prayer; hearken, O God of Jacob! O God, behold our shield, and look upon the face of your anointed. R/

### **A reading from the First Letter of St. John**

Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. And so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit he gave us.

**This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, Alleluia  
Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son.  
Alleluia

### **A reading from the Gospel of Luke**

Each year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favour before God and man.

**This is the Gospel of the Lord:  
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**



**I must be in  
my  
Father's House**