



PRESS RELEASE

DELIVERY OF THE CIASE REPORT TO THE FRENCH CATHOLIC CHURCH

Tuesday, 5 October 2021

Shame, gratitude, determination.

On behalf of the Bishops' Conference of France and the Conference of the Religious of France, we have received today the report we had ordered from the Independent Commission on Sexual Abuse in the Church (CIASE), which our Conferences had asked Mr. Jean-Marc Sauvé, Honorary Vice-President of the Council of State, to preside over, write and pilot.

First of all, we would like to thank Mr. Sauvé and the entire committee, as well as the teams who worked with him, for their immense and essential work. We realize what a difficult struggle it has been for those involved. The outcome is extremely heavy. It shows an appalling reality that we could not imagine regarding the number of victims, the percentage of priests and religious who committed these crimes, and the flaws in the system that made it possible for this to go on for decades and for so few to be prosecuted.

In the face of so many shattered, often destroyed lives, we are ashamed and outraged.

Our thoughts and our great sorrow, as women and men, as bishops or superiors and superiors of religious institutes, go first of all to the victims; those who have been able to speak, those who haven't been able to speak yet or will never be able to, and those who have died. Nothing can justify the fact that they were not listened to, believed, supported, or that most of the perpetrators were not reported and tried.

We are more than ever aware of the courage of the victims who have dared to speak out and we express our deep gratitude to those who have agreed to work alongside us.

We solemnly reaffirm our determination to implement the necessary guidelines and decisions so that such a scandal cannot happen again. We thank those who help us.

We know that it will be a long and slow process before we can hope to deserve the victim's forgiveness and that we need « prove ourselves ».

Our two conferences, the Bishops and the Religious, will study this report and all of the 45 recommendations of the CIASE. The plenary assembly of Bishops and the general assembly of the CORREF which will be held in November will enable us to take the right and necessary measures according to the decisions already taken by each of our conferences.

We strongly encourage the Catholic Church of France, parishes, movements, religious communities, etc., to study the CIASE report, however painful it might be, and to invite their members to discuss it together. This is our moral duty to the victims and their relatives and also to future generations: to look at this terrible reality so that together we can face it and work towards a Church that is more worthy of humanity and of the Christ that it proclaims.

Monseigneur Éric de Moulins-Beaufort, archevêque de Reims, président de la Conférence des évêques de France
Soeur Véronique Margron, op, présidente de la Conférence des religieux et religieuses de France

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