

FORTY THESES AGAINST CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE

PROTECT CHILDREN, HEAL SURVIVORS, REFORM THE CHURCH®



By Vinnie Nauheimer

Dear Bishop: _____

Almost five hundred years ago on October 31, 1517, Dr. Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg. At the turn of the second millennium the church once more finds itself in dire need of major reform. St. Paul admonishes us in Cortinthians 1: 5-6 “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump.” The survivors of Clergy Sexual Abuse, their families, friends and the Catholic laity demand change, justice and reform. These are the Forty Theses of Clergy Sexual Abuse and we demand their immediate adoption by the Roman Catholic Church. We urge you and all members of the Roman Catholic clergy to forward these to the Vatican. Without the immediate implementation of these Forty Theses by the Roman Catholic Church neither the victims of clergy abuse nor the church can move forward.

FORTY THESES OF CLERGY ABUSE

1. The Pope must immediately release and open for public inspection all secret files contained in dioceses throughout the world including the Vatican that have information relating to the abuse of children.
2. The Catholic Church must release and make public the names of all priests, bishops, and cardinals who have had credible accusations of sexual abuse made against them, their current status as well as their current location.
3. The pope must, in writing, free all those survivors from their confidentiality agreements “Gag Clauses” with any dioceses around the world in order to let victims of clergy abuse speak freely.
4. The Vatican should demand of all clergy, as applicable, that as an act of atonement, they will, in writing, declare null and void all private confidentiality agreements made

between them and their victims.

5. The Pope and the Vatican must release and forever disavow keeping any secrets of the “Holy Office” related to clergy or any other form of abuse perpetrated by the clergy.
6. All secret letters and instructions issued to cardinals and bishops worldwide such as “Crimen Sollicitationis” are to be declared null and void.
7. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must change its policy on clerical abusers to demand under penalty that they report cases of abuse to their local civil authorities.
8. The pope will issue a Papal Bull reconfirming the love of Jesus for children and that none should be harmed as they, and not the clergy are our greatest treasure.
9. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must recognize that the children are our future and if the church is to have one, their future too.
10. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must recognize that all children have the inalienable right to grow up without fear of being sexually abused by any cleric or lay minister.
11. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must acknowledge that children have the right to attend mass, serve on the altar and attend church functions without being molested.
12. The Church must acknowledge that parents have the right to expect that their children will not be sexually abused, molested or otherwise harmed by priests, nuns or deacons while engaged in church activities.
13. The Church must declare in the plainest of terms that the sexual abuse of children is against God’s Law, Natural Law, and publicly restate that abuse is against both Canon Law and the proscription of the Catechism.
14. The church must admit that in the past, when it came to sexual abuse of children by clergy, there have historically been no rules, no order, no discipline, no desire to change, and make a sacred vow to erase this mentality from their clerical culture.
15. Having recognized the above to be true, they must take the actions necessary to enforce these changes listed in thesis’ one through fourteen.
16. All members of the Catholic Church have the right to expect exemplary behavior out of those who would answer the call of ordination and the right to receive justice when the clergy falls short.
17. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church will accept the fact that the priesthood is comprised of men who are mere mortals some of whom have a penchant for evil

18. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must remove any such men quickly and decisively when their behavior endangers the safety and welfare of any child.
19. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must acknowledge that the priesthood is a “privilege” and not a “right.” Privileges can and should be revoked when abused.
20. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must understand that the privilege of serving as a priest must be revoked when the actions of a priest endangers the welfare of children.
21. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must publicly acknowledge the many types of abuse being committed by their clergy.
22. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must stop trying to make clergy abuse a homosexual issue. It is not necessarily true with pedophiles and is certainly not true in the global cases of abuse committed against female children and teens.
23. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must admit that female children, teens and adults are abused as often as their male counterparts.
24. It is incumbent on the Catholic Church to recognize and accept the equality of men and women in the eyes of man and God in all matters, not only sexual abuse.
25. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church must join the world in recognizing the sexual abuse of children as a criminal act.
26. As a criminal act it is incumbent upon the Catholic Church to report criminal activities to the proper civil authorities and not to hinder their reporting.
27. The Catholic Church must recognize that the criminal activities of errant priests can in no way benefit the well-being or future of the church.
28. The church must beg for forgiveness, not expect it.
29. The church must make amends to all those that have been sexually abused by its clergy.
30. The church must make amends to all those who have suffered at the hands of the church because of their efforts to expose these grievous criminal actions.
31. The Catholic Church must recognize the rights of all victims of sexual abuse and their families to be hurt and angry.
32. The Catholic Church must recognize their moral and spiritual obligation to help victims and their families work through the anger and pain caused by clerical abuse and the churches indifference toward predatory priests.
33. The hierarchy and all clerics must adhere to the wishes of the current Holy Father who

said, "All bishops must carry out their pastoral ministry with utmost care in order to help foster the protection of minors, and they will be held accountable," and his two predecessors: Pope Benedict XVI, who said: "Victims should receive compassion and care, and those responsible for these evils must be brought to justice." And John Paul II who said, "There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young."

34. All members of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church who were themselves abusers, covered-up for abusers or shuffled abusers should immediately tender their resignations in order to abide by the wishes of the current pope and the last two; all of whom are and have been spiritual leaders and representative of Jesus Christ here on earth
35. If the hierarchy of the Catholic Church who covered up and shuffled predator priests causing considerable harm to the young do not resign, it is incumbent upon the pope to force them out or forever more be known as a hypocrite. Those of the hierarchy who ignore the explicit words of these three popes will forever more be known as heretics who deny Jesus Christ and the church he founded.
36. The church must admit full accountability for the Clergy Abuse Scandal. No accountability is the equivalent of no belief in judgment from the higher power to whom they ascribe their faith.
37. Pride is one of the seven deadly sins. Secrecy, when used to hide failings is pride in disguise. A church keeping secrets becomes a darkened wasteland. Secrets create the perfect breeding ground for all sorts of nefarious and malignant growths. Secrecy is a cesspool fertilizing the dregs of humanity and creating offspring that are as rotten as the offal from which they spring. The abundance of slime generated by the Roman Catholic Church's cesspool became so large it spilled over its banks and ran into the light where it was laid bare to the world. The culture of secrecy regarding sexual abuse must end!
38. The Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church #2326 tells us: "Scandal is a grave offense when by deed or omission it deliberately leads others to sin gravely." There is hardly a more apt statement against either clergy abuse or bishops moving pedophiles.
#2287 tells us: "Anyone who uses the power at his disposal in such a way that it leads others to do wrong becomes guilty of scandal and responsible for the evil that he has directly or indirectly encouraged. "Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come!"
The hierarchy has brought grave scandal down upon their church and a just penalty is demanded for those who facilitated this scandal.
39. Recognizing the shame, scandal and scorn that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has brought down upon the global church, the number of good Catholics that they have driven from the church by their blatant lies and the generations that the hierarchy has lost for the church: an appropriate penance is demanded.

40. Create a day of Holy Obligation making it mandatory for all members of the clergy to attend a mass once a year which is to be dedicated to remembering all the victims of clergy abuse who have suffered at the hands of the church, the damage done by scandal to the church and to pray that a scourge like this never again plagues the church or any other organization.

By conveying to you this copy of these Forty Theses, I affirm my support of them and urge you to forward them on to the Vatican and Holy See.

Sincerely

Name

Date