



## **A Response from a Healing Circle Participant**

I am sitting in awe and wonder today thinking about the community of the faithful who came and journeyed together yesterday in the healing circle with your expert, sensitive, loving facilitation. A gathering of a priest who is a whistleblower speaking out about abuse in the Catholic Church and working to end it; a Dominican sister who has worked to remove priests who abuse children, led an office of victim services and has journeyed with many victims and survivors of clergy sexual abuse to heal; a religious education teacher in a local Catholic parish; an active lay person who had been a Catholic seminarian; three victim survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

I appreciated the sharing of our diverse experiences in the deep listening that allowed each of us to share and all of us to see, acknowledge and affirm harm done by sexual abuse in the Church and to imagine what can help now to live a new story in our individual lives and faith, in the Church and in society.

As I said yesterday, the biggest harm for me as a victim was that no one had the power to protect me and no one came who could see me, understand what happened, stand by me, restore me as a child of God welcome in the Church and in society and work to make the Church a safe and sacred place. The healing circle yesterday offered me that experience for which I am grateful.

