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Pope should read SNAP letter

Tom Roberts | Jun. 10, 2010 NCR Today

The wrap-up of the Year of the Priest celebration is colliding with the ongoing fallout from the spreading priest sex-abuse scandal, setting up an unlikely gathering of forces in Rome. [1]

One of the groups on hand is the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, better known as SNAP, the group formed by survivors and that has been advocating for survivors and for church transparency since very early in the scandal. As might be expected, the group has been vilified by some in the U.S. hierarchy. Its members have been prohibited from conducting programs on church property and it has been generally marginalized in official church circles.

That's unfortunate. Because no matter how deeply one might disagree with a tactic employed here or there, the fact remains that no group has been more conversant with the scandal, its effects and its causes than those actually abused by priests.

So we hope that somehow Pope Benedict gets to actually read a direct, clear and comprehensive letter written to the pope by SNAP leaders. [2]

The letter anticipates a papal apology and deals convincingly with a range of shibboleths that repeatedly are used by some members of the hierarchy in attempts to discredit SNAP. If the pope intends to use the occasion of the Year of the Priest celebrations to apologize to clergy abuse victims, perhaps a good start would be listening to the victims themselves and what they think an apology should and should not say.

Source URL (retrieved on *11/28/2015 - 06:36*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pope-should-read-snap-letter

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[1] http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/06/10/religion.priests.gather/
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