NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Survivors group: If Francis is serious, must fire Bishop Finn

Joshua J. McElwee | Apr. 5, 2013 NCR Today
Pope Francis

A U.S. group that advocates for survivors of clergy sex abuse has sharply criticized reports that Pope Francis told the Vatican's chief doctrinal enforcer to act "decisively" on the matter.

The pope, the National Survivors Advocates Coalition said in a release Friday afternoon, "doesn?t need to call for action in the Roman Catholic Church regarding the sexual abuse crisis. He can take action."

"We hope today's news regarding his meeting with the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is a first foray into this issue and not an exit and closed book strategy," the group continued.

"If this is all Pope Francis is planning on doing, it is crushingly disappointing."

The statement from NSAC comes after the Vatican released a statement Friday morning announcing that the pope had met with Archbishop Gerhard L. Muller, prefect of the Vatican's powerful Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The pope, according to that release, told Muller [1] "to act decisively concerning cases of sexual abuse."

The pope, the statement said, asked the congregation to continue: "promoting measures that protect minors, above all; help for those who have suffered such violence in the past; necessary procedures against those found guilty; (and) the commitment of bishops' conferences in formulating and implementing the necessary directives in this is area that is so important for the church's witness and credibility."

In its response, NSAC said "If we keep doing what we?ve been doing that means we keep getting what we?ve got."

The group pointed specifically to the situation of Kansas City, Mo., Bishop Robert Finn, who last September became the first U.S. bishop [2] to be found guilty of criminally shielded a priest who was a threat to children.

Following the conviction, which was on a misdemeanor charge of failing to reported suspected child abuse, Finn has remained the city's bishop.

"What we?ve got is not the answer to the crisis," wrote NSAC Friday.

"What we?ve got is the criminally convicted Bishop Robert Finn of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, MO still in office. Telling the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to act doesn't remove Bishop Finn."

"What we?ve got are bishops and chancery and curia officials who deflect and dodge until the glare of media attention gets too hot to continue doing it," the group continued.

"What we?ve got are credibly accused priests whose cases have never been acted on by the Congregation who remain on paid vacations. What we?ve got is pain."

Source URL (retrieved on *03/09/2014 - 22:56*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/survivors-group-if-francis-serious-must-fire-bishop-finn

Links:
[1] http://ncronline.org/node/49176
[2] http://ncronline.org/node/32083