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Pope Francis? second challenge in two days on sex abuse

Dennis Coday | Mar. 7, 2014 NCR Today

The four men ? three priests and an ex-priest ? whose allegations of sexual misconduct against Scotland?s Cardinal Keith O'Brien forced the cardinal?s resignation a year ago, say local church authorities are stonewalling an investigation of O?Brien. They have made a direct appeal to Pope Francis to ?sort this out.?

O?Brien made international headlines last year when the accusations surfaced, just as the cardinal was preparing to travel to Rome for the conclave that would elect Francis pope.

After the allegations were public, O?Brien announced he would not attend the conclave and then he resigned.

The men are seeking a public apology for "the victims of O'Brien and all those affected by abuse throughout the church" and an investigation into governance in the diocese. Specifically, they want to know:

- how O'Brien had come to be appointed,
- the extent of his predatory behavior
- whether those close to him had been maneuvered into positions of power under his leadership and
- about potential sacramental abuse by O'Brien.

O'Brien 's successor, Archbishop Leo Cushley, insists that only Rome can initiate an inquiry into O'Brien's sexual behavior.

Read more details here: Cardinal Keith O'Brien's accusers take fight for justice to the pope [1]

The Guardian reports that the Vatican ordered O'Brien to undertake an unspecified period of "prayer and penance." Recently, however, he has been sending out personal cards with photographs of himself dressed in the cardinal?s robes. Critics say that proves a lack of remorse on O?Brien?s part and the Vatican?s inability to handle him.

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[1] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/01/cardinal-keith-o-brien-accusers-justice-pope-francis