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We Are Church objects to JPII canonization

Dennis Coday | Sep. 30, 2013 NCR Today

The International We are Church [1] reform organization, which counts chapters in 20 countries, released the following statement this morning

Not all the People of God agree about canonisation of J.P. II .
The opinion of the*International Movement We Are Church*

Today Pope Francis has announced in Concistoro the day of canonisation of Pope John Paul II on April 27, 2014 - together with John Pope XXIII.

The decision concerning Pope John Paul II is not agreed from all in the Catholic Church. The *International Movement We Are Church* has expressed its opinion already in a press release on 16 January 2011.

> Pope John Paul II was a pope of great contradiction. His tragedy lies in the discrepancy between his commitment to reform and dialogue in the world and his return to authoritarianism within the church.
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> It was his penchant for spiritual authoritarianism that contributed to the greatest tragedy of his tenure as pope: the sexual abuse of thousands of children globally. By holding church hierarchy paramount above the needs of the people, John Paul II perpetuated a toxic environment in which priests were permitted, often repeatedly, to sexually abuse children as long as the criminal behaviour was kept secret, preserving the public image of untarnished leadership.
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> Perhaps one of the best reflections of this is seen in John Paul II?s strong relationship with the Legion of Christ and its founder Marcial Maciel. Maciel is accused of decades of serious abuse against women and youth, much of which was allowed to percolate due in part to the 1983 bylaws John Paul II approved for Maciel?s religious order that demanded secrecy and prohibited criticism of its founder.
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> It was John Paul II?s same need for hierarchical control that also lead to the constriction of theology with scarring impact on people?s lives. His attempt to discredit liberation theology left thousands working for liberation without the full theological and ecclesial support they deserved while suffering under brutal political regimes.
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> Spiritual authoritarianism was also seen in John Paul II?s attempt to suppress discourse on gender equality which, in turn, deprived the Catholic world of the gifts women would bring to church leadership. His stance against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people places him in complicity with local churches and governments who continue to deny the civil and moral equality of LGBT persons. Additionally, his repeated denouncements of condom use complicated the moral

choice of millions around the world attempting to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and promote sexual health.

The International Movement We Are Church believes that beatification and ultimately sainthood should not be measured by whether a ?miracle? can be attributed to a particular person, but rather, whether someone?s life truly embodies the values of Christ who sought, not power, but the well being of God?s people.

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Links:
[1] http://www.imwac.net/413/