



ERZBISCHÖFLICHES ORDINARIAT MÜNCHEN : PRESSESTELLE

— PRESSEMITTEILUNG —

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Cardinal Marx makes a statement on publication of the report

Statement of the Archbishop of Munich and Freising on presentation of the new report on sexual abuse
within the domain of the Archdiocese

Munich, 20 January 2022. Cardinal Reinhard Marx makes the following statement regarding today's publication of the report on "Sexual abuse of minors and adult wards by clergy and Church personnel in the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising in the period 1945 to 2019" [report in German] by the external law firm Westpfahl Spilker Wastl, as commissioned by the Archdiocese:

"My first thoughts today are with those affected by sexual abuse who have experienced harm and suffering at the hands of Church representatives, priests and other employees of the Church on an appalling scale. I am deeply shocked and ashamed.

Meeting with those who suffered sexual abuse has been a turning point for me. They have changed my perception of the Church and continue to do so.

As I have said repeatedly, as the Archbishop of Munich and Freising I feel in part responsible for the Church as an institution in recent decades. As the Archbishop in office, I therefore sincerely apologise on behalf of the Archdiocese for the suffering inflicted on people within the Church in recent decades.

We have known for years that sexual abuse in the Church was not taken seriously, that the perpetrators were often not held accountable in the right way, that those responsible looked the other way.

It is for precisely this reason that, since the first report we commissioned in 2010, we also commissioned the law firm WSW to produce the report presented today. It is important and indispensable for addressing the cases of sexual abuse in our Archdiocese, as well as for the Church as a whole. A lot has already changed and been implemented in the Archdiocese since 2010, and we are nowhere close to finished. We will discuss and implement further changes on the basis of the recommendations of the report.

It is precisely because it is such a comprehensive report that we are working intensely to read it thoroughly, analyse it, and consider and discuss the findings and further consequences. The Vicar General Mr Klingan, Dr Herrmann and I will soon consult with the Victims' Advisory board and the Independent Inquiry commission.

I very much hope that next Thursday we will be able to present a first outlook outlining the future course of action. The responsible parties in the diocese will continue to work closely together on this. We received the report today, and of course I watched the press conference. The Vicar General, the Head of Office, and I will now analyse the report together. We are acting together.

Now is the time to seize the momentum provided by the report and take additional steps for the future. The sexual abuse crisis is and remains a profound shock to the Church, and the further course of action and inquiry includes a stronger focus on the victims and survivors and addressing flawed power



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structures and attitudes. But there is more to it than that. It is about the renewal of the Church, it is about what we are equally striving for and promoting on the Synodal Path in Germany. Because this Synodal Path has arisen from the MHG study and its analyses. Addressing sexual abuse cannot be separated from the path of change, renewal and reform of the Church. We will continue to work on this together.

Finally, I would like to stress once again that the focus of the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising is now on considering the perspectives of those affected – also in order to proceed into the future.”