

Ending Clergy Abuse: Clergy abuse victims to Amb. Donnelly: reconsider attending the Pope's funeral

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Joining an open letter issued today, the US section of the international clergy abuse organization Ending Clergy Abuse (ECA) is calling on state delegations, including the one being sent by President Joe Biden, to reconsider attending the funeral of the late Pope Benedict XVI in light of his demonstrated direct involvement in the cover-up of clergy sex crimes. Biden's delegation is being led by US Ambassador to the Holy See, Joe Donnelly.

Last year, after [receiving a letter](#) from US clergy abuse victim organizations, Ambassador Donnelly, [in an email, promised](#) to meet with US victims following his confirmation. Since then, after repeated attempts to contact the ambassador, victims have yet to receive a reply.

The Biden administration has made several laudatory official statements regarding the passing of Pope Benedict XVI without addressing his years of covering up widespread human rights violations against American children by thousands of US Catholic clergy, both as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (CDF) and as Pope. Pope Benedict XVI was involved in some of the most notorious cases of sexual abuse in the United States, [including that of Father Lawrence Murphy](#), who raped and sexually assaulted over 200 deaf children.

In 2011, the US-based Center for Constitutional Rights filed [a historic case against Pope Benedict XVI and other high-level Vatican officials](#) to the International Criminal Court in the Hague, with 20,000 pages documenting Pope Benedict XVI's responsibility in human rights violations against children as head of the Vatican state.

President Biden has spoken fondly of his Catholic faith and education, including his years as an adolescent at Archmere Academy, a Catholic preparatory school in Claymont, Delaware, operated by the Norbertine religious order. At the time both his sons, Beau and Hunter Biden, attended Archmere, internal church documents show several Norbertine faculty members were known by the religious order to be sexually assaulting students.

International clergy abuse survivors and advocates sent the following letter to Ambassador Donnelly and other state delegations attending Pope Benedict XVI's funeral.

To our respective state delegations:

This week, the Vatican will lead a global memorial and celebration, honoring the life and legacy of Pope Benedict XVI. You will travel to Vatican City for his funeral, and in doing so, you will be acknowledging the historical, political, and social power of the Catholic Church. Meanwhile millions of clergy abuse victims around the world will be forced to witness what will likely be a rewriting of history concerning the legacy and actions of a man who is directly and partly responsible for decades of widespread and systematic rape and sexual abuse of children in the church.

Throughout most of his professional life, Pope Benedict XVI was one the chief architects of the cover-up of abuse in the Catholic Church. As Archbishop of Munich, he concealed and transferred known abusive clergy and until his death misled investigators and the public about his direct responsibility for it. As head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith (CDF) under John Paul II, he acted as the Pope's chief global fixer for 23 years, shielding bishops from criminal, civil, and moral accountability for conducting themselves the way he did when Archbishop of Munich. After a short time as Pope, history finally caught up with him, and he resigned before the full extent of his role in these crimes had emerged. After his resignation, Pope Benedict XVI had almost ten years to make amends for his actions. He failed to do so.

In many of your countries, the Vatican is currently obstructing governmental investigations into clergy sexual abuse by refusing to share documents and evidence related to abuse and institutional concealment with state officials. A great deal of this evidence pertains to child sexual abuse and cover-up that occurred under the leadership of Pope Benedict XVI, while he was head of the CDF and then

Pope. The Vatican continues to ignore the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child's mandate that would bring the Holy See into compliance with international human rights law.

Your planned attendance of Pope Benedict XVI's funeral and the official praise you have bestowed upon him with no acknowledgement of his central role in the global clergy abuse crisis is deeply harmful to survivors and an affront to memory and justice.

We are asking you to take the side of victims against their abusers and those who would deny our suffering and instead to do the following:

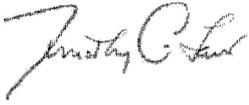
1. Use your state power and diplomatic influence to demand that Pope Francis make zero tolerance for clergy sexual abuse a universal church law. Thus far, like his predecessor, he has refused to do so.
2. Make an official request of the Vatican to share all documents and evidence related to clergy sexual abuse and cover-up with justice officials in your respective states. This would include direct evidence of thousands of cases of abuse that may have been mishandled by Pope Benedict that remain in the Vatican's secret archive.
3. Demand Pope Francis order his bishops to cooperate fully with all governmental investigations into clergy sexual abuse, including that of the United Nations, which so far, he has not done.

By attending this event and remaining silent regarding Pope Benedict XVI's failure to protect your nation's children, wittingly or not, you are participating in the cover-up of clergy sexual abuse. This is why we are respectfully asking that you reconsider your presence at the funeral. Instead, we call on you to join survivors around the world, including those in your own nation, in bringing about a post-abuse church, which will never happen without truth-telling, transparency, and accountability.

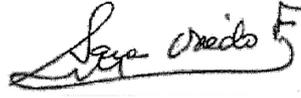
Sincerely,

Ending Clergy Abuse Board Members

Timothy Law, USA



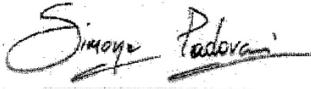
Sara Oviedo, Ecuador



Denise Buchanan, Jamaica



Simone Padovani, Italy



Adalberto Mendez, Mexico

