



VEOK Information 04-mar-2017

Formanden Kaare Rübner Jørgensen orienterer

Den 22. marts 2014 oprettede pave Frans Den pavelige Kommission til Beskyttelse af Mindreårige. Dens formål var at fremkomme med initiativer, som kunne beskytte børn mod pædofile præster. Blandt de 17 medlemmer af kommissionen var to personer, der selv som børn havde været misbrugt: englænderen Peter Saunders og ireren Marie Collins. De var personligt udpeget af pave Frans.



I juni 2015 fremkom kommissionen med, hvad der ses som dens mest betydningsfulde forslag: skabelsen af et internt tribunal i Vatikanet, der kan dømme biskopper, som havde dækket over præster, som havde forgrebet sig på børn og unge.

Peter Saunders, der er leder af National Association for People Abused in Childhood, havde fra starten været en torn i øjet for folkene i Vatikanet. I januar 2015 kritiserede han offentligt pave Frans for udnævnelsen af Juan Barros til biskop i Osorno, Chile, og senere opfordrede han ham til at afsætte den australske kardinal George Pell fra hans post som chef for Vatikanets finanser på grund af hans handlinger som biskop i Australien. Kardinalen truede med retssag, og kommissionen distancerede sig fra Saunders med en udtalelse om, at det var hans personlige mening. Resultatet blev, at Saunders forlod kommissionen.

”De gør, hvad kirkens embedsmænd har gjort i årtier: snedigt fokuserer og diskuterer de meningsløse forholdsregler for at give indtryk af fremskridt, mens de i grunden intet ændrer,” udtalte han.

Nu har det andet offermedlem af kommissionen, Marie Collins, valgt at trække sig. Hun føler det spild af tid at deltage i kommissionens møder, når den ikke har opbakning af andre organer i Vatikanet. Ja, nogle af dem saboterer direkte kommissionens arbejde. Blandt de samarbejdsu villige nævner hun troslærekongregationen.



Om hele denne sag skriver den britiske avis The Guardian:

Abuse survivor Marie Collins quits Vatican child protection body

Resignation of commission's last remaining member who had suffered clerical sexual abuse is a major setback for Pope Francis

Marie Collins says the commission has suffered constant setbacks at the hands of the Vatican's administration.

Stephanie Kirchgaessner in Rome

The Guardian

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A prominent survivor of clerical sex abuse has resigned from a special Vatican commission that was created by Pope Francis to tackle the problem, saying the church's most senior clerics continue to put "other concerns" before the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

Marie Collins, who was molested by a priest when she was 13 years old, said in a written statement she had made a final decision to resign after she learned that a Vatican department was failing to comply with a basic new recommendation that all correspondence from victims and survivors should receive a response.

"I learned in a letter from this particular [congregation] last month that they are refusing to do so," Collins wrote in a searing statement to the National Catholic Reporter.

"I find it impossible to listen to public statements about the deep concern in the church for the care of those whose lives have been blighted by abuse, yet to watch privately as a congregation in the Vatican refuses to even acknowledge their letters."

She added: "It is a reflection of how this whole abuse crisis in the church has been handled; with fine words in public and contrary actions behind closed doors."

Collins's resignation represents a devastating indictment of the church's handling of sexual abuse under Pope Francis. For years since her 2014 appointment to the commission, she has been critical of the church's slow response to issues around clerical sex abuse but has stood by the work of the commission and the pope's commitment to coming to grips with the problem.



But on Wednesday, Collins, an Irish national, described a church bureaucracy that was unwilling to cooperate with a commission that had not been provided with enough resources, had inadequate support staff and faced intense cultural resistance within the church despite having had the backing of the pope.

“I have come to the point where I can no longer be sustained by hope. As a survivor I have watched events unfold with dismay,” Collins said in her statement.

Collins’s decision to leave the commission comes one year after the only other abuse survivor who was appointed to the commission, Peter Saunders, was forced to take a leave of absence after he complained the commission was doing far too little to tackle abuse.

Collins said one of the reasons she decided to resign was the Vatican’s failure to establish a tribunal recommended by the commission to hold negligent bishops to account when they ignored reports of abuse. Even though the idea was backed by Francis and announced in June 2015, it was found to have unspecified legal difficulties by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the church body that primarily deals with abuse accusations.

In another case, “safeguarding guidelines” that were developed by the commission to be used by bishops’ conferences around the world as a basis to draw up their own policies on abuse had not been disseminated to the appropriate officials, whom Collins said were “refusing to cooperate with the commission”.

Collins said the refusal was unacceptable. “Is this reluctance driven by internal politics, fear of change, clericalism which instills a belief that ‘they know best’ or a closed mindset which sees abuse as an inconvenience or a clinging to old institutional attitudes?” she wrote.

“I do not know the answer but it is devastating in 2017 to see that these men still can put other concerns before the safety of children and vulnerable adults.”

Collins said the piling on of concerns about the church’s reluctance ultimately led her to believe she could no longer serve on the commission and maintain her integrity.

She said she had never had the opportunity to speak to Pope Francis during her three-year tenure, but that if she had she would have asked him for three things: that the commission be given the power to implement their recommendations; that it be given more funds to do its work; and to lift the ban on recruiting professional staff from outside the church to work on the issue.

Greg Burke, a spokesman for the pope, declined to comment.



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Sean O'Malley, a Boston cardinal who has spearheaded abuse issues, said in a statement he was thankful for Collins's work and would pray for her and all victims and survivors of sexual abuse.