

Six-month Review of Mutual Support Working Group Project: Moving Toward Restoring Justice for Priests

Earlier this year, the Mutual Support Working Group of AUSCP completed a two-year analysis of the critical issue concerning the lack of due process extended to accused priests and found a reported pattern of multiple infractions of Canon Law committed by bishops and superiors. These infractions have gravely harmed the reputation of priests, caused deep emotional and psychological harm, and eroded the faithful's trust in the Church's commitment to justice. The infractions cited include:

- The imposition of premature penalties before a priest has had the opportunity to defend themselves.
- Publishing the names of priests as accused before substantial and verifiable evidence has been gathered and the investigation completed, including the naming of deceased priests who are unable to defend themselves.
- Continued freezing of priests from their ministry even when no credible evidence is found.

The Association of United States Catholic Priests (AUSCP) reached out to Pope Leo with a heartfelt letter, expressing their prayers and support for his leadership. The letter, announced at the association's annual meeting on June 24th, also highlighted the critical issue concerning the lack of due process extended to accused priests.

The report, accompanied with a letter, was also sent to:

- Cardinal Cupich
- Cardinal Dolan
- Cardinal McElroy
- Cardinal Tobin
- Archbishop Broglio, USCCB President
- James Bogner, Chair, National Review Board
- Bishop Knestout, Committee Chair – Protection of Children and Young People
- Deacon Nojadera, Executive Director, Protection of Children and Young People
- Father Fuller – General Secretary - USCCB
- Archbishop McKnight – Kansas City, Kansas
- All members of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men Superiors and Secular Institutes
- A request was made to the USCCB that the report and Letter to Bishops be distributed to all US Bishops

To date, we have received a response from Cardinal Cupich, Office of Archbishop Broglio, Father Fuller, Bishop Knestout.

We also received press coverage from the NCR, and TheMediaReport.com

Our next phase will be to share our findings and concern of this matter with a larger group of concerned leaders of Catholic organizations.