



MOTHERSOFTHECHILDRENO... Posts



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Dear Journalists, Theologians, Researchers!

We are Mothers of the Children of the Priests.

We're sending you a copy of our letter to the Pan-Amazon Synod.

We want this to be an open letter, about which society gets to know about.

Thank you.

We are a newly formed network of mothers world wide who are gathered from across the world gathered together to to advocate for the Human Rights of our Young children and the Adult Children, also, our kindred sisters who are mothers. We seek for your support during the Pan-Amazon Synod. We ask you to protect the weak ones – the women and the children! We represent the non-governmental organization as "Mothers of the children of priests" (MOCOP). Now, with technology and purpose, we are gathered together, united across the world, to speak as a collective voice for our children and ourselves. Here are women who have been supporting other mothers for about 40 years and have a vast years of experience. Here are mothers who are raising children under the age of 18 and meet the hard reality of life face to face daily. These days some organizations & mass media speak in the name of children of Roman Catholic priests. As the Mothers of these children, it is time that we are recognized and the world hear us too – we are the Mothers who raise these children!

We want to emphasize the most acute question: raising the children under 18. Our position in this question is similar to "*Nota relative alla prassi della Congregazione per il Clero a proposito dei chierici con prole*" [Notes concerning the practice of the Congregation for the Clergy with regard to clerics with children]. A priest who has children must immediately leave the active ministry. We believe that the priest must leave the ministry even if he isn't going to marry the woman. He must take up the responsibilities of bringing up the child 24/7 and meet all the hardships of life which until now was carried only by women. We believe that stigma lies on the children when a priest stays in the ministry and will never end. Around the world are thousands of priests who have left the ministry and found a new job, so the statement that a priest must remain in the ministry, because he would not find the job, is biased.

Very honorable journalists, we ask you to tell about Mothers' position regarding Children of priests and their mothers to society! Please read our **Letter to Synod Statements for minor children and adult children** (see in attachment).



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Bishops, Members of the bishop conference, Participants of the Pan-Amazon Synod.

We contact you in our request to seek your support before the Pan-Amazon Synod. We ask that you fulfill your pastoral promises and Pro-Life mission by protecting the weak ones, the women and the children! We represent a non-profit, non-governmental organization: **“Mothers of the children of priests” (MOCOP)**. We are gathered together, united in our purpose, representing countries from across our the world to speak as a collective voice for both our children and ourselves.

We are the very mothers of children of priests that have been providing emotional support, counseling, occasionally food, clothing and finances to other mothers for over 40 years. We are mothers of adult children of priests. We also represent mothers who are raising minor aged children under the age of 18, enduring the hard realities of life, face to face with our children daily. As mothers, some of us need even more finances than our full-time job provides, we are necessarily caused to leave our child in the care of others so that we can work as part time employees also. Working 1 to 2 part time jobs, also a full-time job to even to provide the basic necessities for living, healthcare and medicine is unjust. This financial destitution places us in situations where we have to be apart from our children, paying for child care, in order to merely work to survive. While their priest parents, “Father”, is living in free housing with meals, clothing and essentials for life. This harsh reality is both cruel and insulting. The disparity in the lives of the mothers of “children of the ordained” to that of their single priest-father is horrifying, in actual reality it is both cruel and heartless. We are the ones who daily provide not only the physical tasks of parenting, but the nurturing, emotional and social support for our children as they grow into adulthood. Our hope is for them to be active in their communities by sharing their own unique gifts, given to them by our God. It is exhausting yet we sacrifice daily to provide shelter, food and clothing for our “children of the



ordained”.

Currently various organizations and mass media speak only in the name of “Children of Roman Catholic Priests”. Please hear us too, we are “the Mothers”, who with our maternal families are those that are providing the actual daily work of nurturing “children of the ordained”. As many of you well know, many of these “priest children” are living in abject poverty, without adequate food, shelter, clothing or shoes!

*How can you ignore the very providers, Mothers, who are the only primary parent taking an active role (often with help from our maternal families)? We are the responsible parent who has assumed the responsibility of protecting our children, by dedicating ourselves to the wellbeing of the child as our focal point, providing the necessary nurturing, emotional and physical support, for these children because their priest-parent refused or was denied the opportunity. As a priest-father, his own parental bonding was denied. **The child is the focus, not the priest.** Canon Law was not followed. The Church Law was put above the needs of an innocent child for the sake of the reputation of the Church. This is the very behavior, avoiding accountability and responsibility that has alienated so many from the Church and is deplorable.*

We want to underline this most acute question - **Raising the Children under 18**. Our position in this question is similar to “*Nota relative alla prassi della Congregazione per il Clero a proposito dei chierici con prole*” [Notes concerning the practice of the Congregation for the Clergy with regard to clerics with children]. A priest who has children must immediately leave the active ministry. Certainly some of these children may have been created in adultery by the woman and priest, some were results of non-consensual sex, rapes, priest sex abuse with minors or relationships with “Vulnerable Persons” targeted by the priest for his own personal gain. We believe that the priest who has integrity, as our own Pope Francis states, “the priority is to the welfare of the child first, not to his ministry”. A true man of character, a priest, must leave the ministry to marry the mother of his child or even if he isn’t going to marry the woman, leave to be an active parent in his child’s life until the child attains the age of adulthood. Obviously the mother once impregnated by the priest-parent, has protected the life inside her, given birth of their child and become accountable. We believe that the priest who was sexually active, made a choice that has consequences. Even if the mother was married or marries another man, he necessarily needs to be active in his own child’s life, to nurture and provide emotional psychological support until the child is of an adult age. Once the child is an adult, the priest can resume his active life as a priest if he chooses, but must maintain a relationship with his child unless both adults, adult child and parent, decide to terminate their active relationship. The Pro-Life parent reality is from conception to adulthood, it is the consequence of sexual activity. **Responsibilities of becoming a priest-parent is equal to the mother, necessarily, he too must provide the parenting responsibilities that come with his actions.** For centuries the Church has hidden these children, stolen them, murdered them or adopted them away from their mother to hide the shame that the Church promoted. **Parenting is a natural God given gift and responsibility.** There must be a pathway for the priest to take up his responsibilities of bringing up his child, the 24hrs each day, 7 days a week availability and nurturing necessary that



mothersofthechildrenofpriests ...

meet all the hardships of life, which until now, was carried only by women.

We believe that unless you recognize this reality, the social stigma, and lies to cover up their priest-parents absence is a violation of their innate human rights. These detrimental behaviors perpetrated by clergy, “the shepherds of the flock, are unjustly thrust upon the children of a priest. *If you continue to not recognize the murderers from the beginning of conception, how can you not recognize the necessary responsibilities that go with the natural parenting and bonding of the priest-parent to his child?* A man without integrity abandons his parent responsibilities. Please don't continue this charade. *For the priest-parent, his child, the very “Gift of Life”, is necessarily the primary priority, not abandoning his own child to fulfill his own personal desire to stay in active ministry. If you fail to recognize these very truth, you are failing to recognize the sacredness of the life of a child, you fail to promote the very Pro-Life virtues, respect and appreciation for the importance of the human family.*

The long term physical and mental health consequences of the priest abandoning his child and parenting responsibilities often ends up in maladaptive coping behaviors: drugs, alcohol, occasionally suicide as a response to that sense of abandonment, shame and unworthiness that the “child of the ordained” encounters in everyday life. It is the very reality of the absent parent, the priest-father. The child of a priest ends up paying for the consequences of his parents actions and those unhealthy Church rules forced upon the priest-child's family.

Currently, around the world are hundreds of thousands of priests who have left the active ministry, found a new employment, so that he could be a man of integrity providing for his family. *The statement that a priest must remain in the ministry, because he would not find a job, is obviously biased, a myth that is unsubstantiated.* Networks of married priests, men educated and ordained in the Roman Catholic Church are available to mentor, provide their experience and some direction for priests being accountable to the children they have created. *From a business and financial aspect, why would you not utilize the many years of education, financial costs of priest formation and training, life experience and skills-sets that the priest-parent brings to the Church?* In this time of need for evangelism, teaching of the message of Christ, counseling, providing pastoral ministry to families around the world, why would you not consider the priest-parent as a role model for men and children? *Perhaps you could consider a realistic pathway for these priest-parents to fulfill an active role within the Church.* As a woman, a mother necessarily balances her family life, nurturing her children and her employment. As a married woman, she nurtures her relationship with her husband, their children, occasionally may be on call for a work related reason (nursing, doctor, police etc.). She constantly reprioritizes to provide for her family's needs. *The priest-parent should be responsible and do the same.* Obviously, the reality that humans have basic needs of love, belonging, acceptance and are sexual human beings. *If a priest chooses to not honor his promises at ordination, celibacy and obedience, at the very least he should be accountable for the nurturing of his child, supporting his child's mother and providing a healthy, respectable role model for his children and his community. It's Canon Law, the child is the priority.*

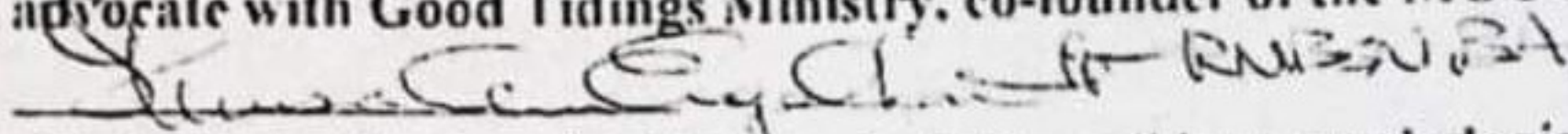


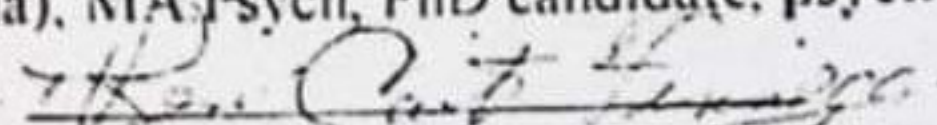
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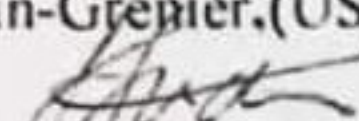
Very honorable bishops, during this Pan-Amazon Synod, we ask that you address our position, bring our concerns to the forefront as Mothers' who are the responsible, accountable parent, regarding children of priests. We are their mothers, nurturers and grandmothers, extended family and community. Please read our **Statements for Minor Children and Adult children of Priests.** (see in attachment).

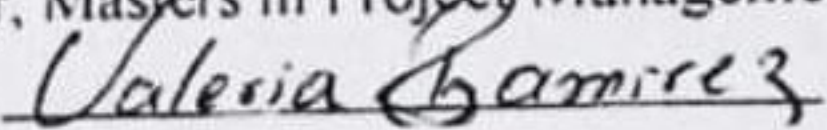
You remain in our prayers, God bless you each,

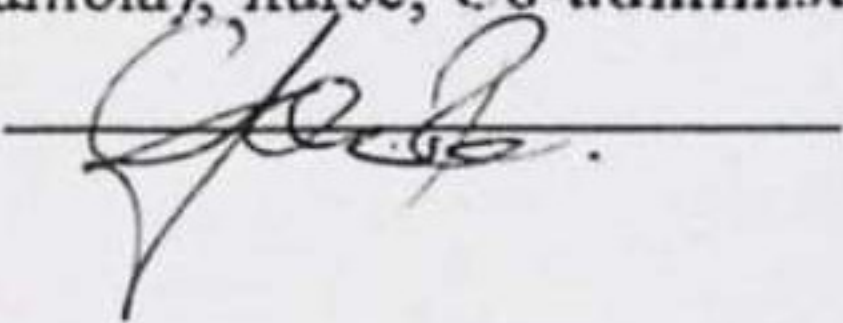
Theresa Ann Engelhardt, (USA), RN, BA, BSN, nurse, teacher, counselor, mother/child advocate with Good Tidings Ministry, co-founder of the MOCOP

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Sintija Sudmale, (Latvia), MA, Psych, PhD candidate, psychologist, educator, co-founder of the MOCOP Signature 

Rev. Cait Finnegan-Greiner, (USA), Co-founder of the Good Tidings Ministry, member of the MOCOP 

Valeria Ramirez, (Colombia), Mechanical Engineer, Masters in Project Management, co-administrator, member of the MOCOP Signature: 

Carolina Rodrigues, (Columbia), nurse, Co-administrator, member of the MOCOP, Signature: 



MAIN THESIS OF MOCOP: MINOR CHILDREN OF PRIESTS

1. **QUESTIONS REGARDING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 THAT HAVE BEEN FATHERED BY PRIESTS MUST BE PRIORITIZED BY THE VATICAN OVER EVERYTHING ELSE, SIMILAR TO QUESTIONS REGARDING SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS.**
 - The border between possible abuse and consensual relationships in these cases is questionable.
 - Solutions for situations of children under the age of 18 very reliable must be different from solutions for adult children of priests, including decisions regarding the priest's staying or not in the ministry.
 - Examining every case, the church must involve the position of mothers and children in the final decision and the decision must depend on their position. (We have experience that so far this is just a formal statement)
 - The examination and decision making process must be transparent.
 - If the final decision is not acceptable for mothers and children, the decision must be reviewed.
 - The church mustn't discriminate mothers depending on their religion and beliefs. Non-Catholics deserve the same dignity as Catholics.
 - The examination process must follow general guidelines. **IT'S EXTREMELY NECESSARY TO INVOLVE MOTHERS WHO RAISE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 IN THE DEVELOPMENT OR PERFECTION OF THESE GUIDELINES.** To develop complex and viable solutions, the mothers' population should be divided in segments – depending on the duration of the relationship, creating a new family etc.

MAIN THESIS OF MOCOP: ADULT CHILDREN OF PRIESTS

*The adult Children of priests, otherwise known as “Children of the ordained”, have the **HUMAN RIGHT** to be Acknowledged by their Biological father, his paternal family and the **POPE**.

*The Canon Laws regarding remain the same as written, though held secret, since Vatican II.

*Because the role of priest/ religious/ monk is one of spiritual and social authority, the relationship between the father and adult mother of the child was necessarily one of imbalance, not on an equal plane in the rights of both mother to the father. The mother, child, her family, necessarily incurred the social stigma, shaming, financial hardship of raising the “child of the ordained” without the biological father's unencumbered availability.

*Although each relationship of a priest/religious/ monk varies with the mother of the child, if the mother was younger than 18 years old, that needs to be addressed as a non-consensual event, if the mother was younger than the legal age of consent.

*It is understood that the biological father, parent, had chosen to not respect his choice of following Roman Catholic Church Canon Law re: a promise of obedience to his Church superior or to maintain his celibate state and remain chaste.



mothersofthechildrenofpriests ...

*The opportunity of relationship of the adult child and his/ her father (if father is living) and the paternal family should be accessible at for as much time as the adult child chooses to explore their Parental/ child bond.

*Because of the forced separation and intervention of the Roman Catholic Church coming between the natural bond of the parent and child, it is up to the adult child to choose the number of opportunities to visit with his biological father during his/ her lifetime. Like any normal parental relationship, how often they would like to have contact with their father, the biological parent will be discerned after at least 3-5 visits.

*Because the child is of adult age, the child of the priest has a Right to be acknowledged by the father's family and choose to discern of he/ she desires to have contact with the extended family: Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins or siblings (full or half siblings).

*Any biographical information, (family heritage and family folklore) should be made available to the adult child.

*Any medical information, (disease history, predisposition, genetic traits) should be made available to the adult child.

*A lifetime of natural parental bonding has been interrupted and interfered with by the Roman Catholic Church, the psycho-social and spiritual healing will need to be adjusted and discussed re: their future as Father and child.

*The Mental Health and Childhood Trauma (PTSD) needs to be acknowledged and respected by the biological father, the paternal family and the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy.

*Their natural discernment, choices, concerns and personal growth needs to be respected and honored. There is no time frame or limit in time for the childhood and parental trauma of the father, to come to complete healing. The choice will be up to both the adult child and father. Not limited or interfered with, no less than 3 visits.

*The long-term mental health needs of the adult child need to be addressed. Counseling services by an objective professional, unbiased, therapist or counselor needs to be assessed and provided. (not Church employed). Complete confidentiality, privacy, during in therapy hospitalization, medical or psychological care needs to be adhered to.

*All of the financial charges for these services will be at the charged to the Roman Catholic Church administrators who created the situation of interference with the natural parental binding.

*Mental Health needs will include interpersonal/ relationship & marital counseling, Job loss counseling, Disability, hospital and out-patient Mental Health Services as deemed appropriate to the diagnoses of impairment due to the intentional emotional and spiritual harm that incurred as a result of the denial of parental bonding.

*If the child is a result of a criminal event; sexual assault, rape; the adult child has the choice in following up with legal authorities as he/ she deems appropriate.