



“Asking for forgiveness is not enough” Pope Francis demands answers, actions, and safe spaces for victims of abuse

- *The new **Pope Video** is an appeal to listen, accompany, and protect people who have been abused by members of the ecclesial community.*
- ***Francis’** message focuses on victims of this evil, who should be “at the center” of everything.*
- *The **Church** is responsible for providing safe spaces for victims and allowing them to find there “a concrete response to their pain and suffering.”*

(Vatican City, March 2, 2023) – The [Pope Video](#) for March has been published with the prayer intention that the Holy Father is entrusting to the entire **Catholic Church** through the [Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network](#).

This month’s message is dedicated to all the people who have been victims of abuse, “especially to those committed by members of the Church,” that they may “find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.”

For **Pope Francis**, victims are the ones who should be “at the center of everything”; they are the ones who need “answers; concrete actions to repair the horrors they have suffered and to prevent them from happening again.” “Asking for forgiveness is necessary,” he says at the beginning of the video, “but it is not enough”.

Listen, accompany, protect, repair

The path that the Holy Father proposes for responding to the abuses that have been committed must begin with bringing them “to light in society and in families.” It’s a tragedy that must not be hidden, neither in the Church nor “in clubs, or in other kinds of institutions.”

It is fundamental, Francis goes on to explain, that the Church offer “safe spaces for victims to be heard, supported psychologically, and protected.”



Flowers, light, and live beginning anew

This month, **Francis'** concern for victims and his call to bring cases of abuse to light are accompanied by an animated video that the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network has created together with Italian artist Hermes Mangialardo. It's a story with powerful symbolic content, that plays with the comparison of light and darkness and speaks about the uniqueness of every human life and the profound suffering caused by violence. On the walls of a dark house, in which shadowy curtains impede the entrance of light, there hang pictures – symbolizing how each life is a work of art – which depict flowers, which wither precisely due to the lack of light. The pictures are of various kinds and colors – some detailed, others just sketched out by a child's hand – hung in various rooms of the house: the children's bedroom, a corner with sports equipment, the living room, etc. All the rooms, which are very different from each other, share in common the darkness that dominates them until the curtains in the living room are torn, finally allowing the light in. The rays of sunlight not only illuminate the house, but also allow those wounded flowers – which neither the frame nor the glass have managed to protect from the violence that has penetrated deeply into their hearts – to return to life and to begin slowly to lift themselves up again, bearing their wounds with them.

Fr. Frédéric Fornos S.J., International Director of the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#), commented about this intention: "In the Gospel, Jesus, speaking from the depths of his heart, says: 'If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea' (Mt 18:6). This reveals Jesus' suffering in the face of this intolerable crime. It's difficult to find words in response to this aberration. 'When we experience the desolation caused by these ecclesial wounds, we will do well, with Mary, "to insist more upon prayer"' (St. Ignatius of Loyola, Spiritual Exercises, 319), Pope Francis reminds us in his 'Letter to the People of God' (2018). The Pope wants the Catholic Church to pray during the month of March for the victims abuses of power and of conscience, and of sexual abuse, to 'awaken our conscience and arouse our solidarity and commitment to a culture of care' and to fight with determination against every kind and form of abuse. This prayer space can lead us to reflect on the structural and ideological causes that have led to these abuses and to their being made invisible. Prayer opens our hearts, allows us to listen and see, and leads us to act against these crimes that disfigure the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the face of the Church, so we can find, as the Pope's prayer intention says, concrete responses to the pain and suffering of the victims."



The Pope Video is possible thanks to the generous contributions of many people. You can donate by following [this link](#).

Where can you watch the video?

- [Official website of The Pope Video](#)
- [YouTube channel of The Pope Video](#)
- [Facebook page of The Pope Video](#)
- [The Pope Video on Twitter](#)
- [The Pope Video on Instagram](#)
- [The Pope on Twitter @Pontifex](#)
- [The Pope on Instagram @Franciscus](#)

About The Pope Video

The Pope Video is an official global initiative with the purpose of disseminating the Holy Father's monthly prayer intentions. It is carried out by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer). **Since the year 2016, The Pope Video has had more than 189 million views across all the Vatican's social networks, and is translated into more than 23 languages, receiving press coverage in 114 countries.** The videos are produced and created by the team of The Pope Video of the Prayer Network, coordinated by Andrea Sarubbi, and distributed by the La Machi Communication for Good Causes agency. The project is supported by [Vatican Media](#). More information at: [The Pope Video](#)

About the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is a Vatican foundation, with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action in response to the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are presented in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. The foundation's mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus, a mission of compassion for the world. It was founded in 1844 as the Apostleship of Prayer. It is present in 89 countries and is made up of more than 22 million Catholics. It includes a youth branch, the EYM: Eucharistic Youth Movement. In December 2020, the Pope constituted this pontifical work as a Vatican foundation and approved its new statutes. Its international director is Fr. Frédéric Fornos, SJ. For more information, visit: <https://www.popesprayer.va>

About Hermes Mangialardo

Hermes Mangialardo – an Italian artist born in 1975 in Copertino, in the province of Lecce – does everything that has to do with digital animation. He began his activity as a director of music videos, receiving various awards. He then oriented his work towards the production of short films and advertisements, especially regarding social awareness. He combines the production of animations and video clips with his activity as a visual artist and 3D projection mapper, creating 3D projections on architecture throughout Europe that have earned him various international prizes. He had already collaborated with the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network for the creation of the Pope Video for February 2021, regarding women who are victims of violence. For more information: hermesmangialardo.com.

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