

To all who've been involved in our joint initiative:

A huge thank you for doing what in the past would have been impossible! We have taken a new route in collaborating with a wider audience, speaking with one voice and getting our "unfiltered voice" directly to the Vatican! Many kudos for your hard work and working within impossible deadlines in order to make this innovative plunge into a new era come to pass. Hundreds of signatories continue to pour in and comments hailing this initiative keep coming in as well. It is not too late to have your organization join with us.

Where we've come from

We began with a teleconference call on September 4, 2013 that brought 61 participants together to share their hopes for reform of the Catholic Church.

We agreed that acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of the baptized faithful to effective participation in the decision making of the church was our key agenda item to propose for discussion by the Pope and advisors for their Oct. 1-3 meeting.

A committee made up of nine different countries worked collaboratively to draft a letter that addressed both the primary concern and some of the umbrella issues expressed on the call, to engage in a lively process of revision, and to seek further revision by putting it out to all the organizations for feedback and ratification. Further work was done by phoning cardinal's offices and consulting contacts in Rome to ascertain how best to deliver the letters with assurance that they would reach the Cardinals and Pope.

Press conferences were held around the world on Sept. 25 (except Ireland was Sept 30). Here are the full reports of each one:

<http://www.catholicchurchreform.com/reformGroups.html>

Press Releases were also sent out around the world on Sept. 25. Over a dozen news articles and media interviews have been reported to date appearing in 8 different countries. To see these, click on <http://www.catholicchurchreform.com/books.html>.

As you can see, the conferences and resulting news articles and interviews were a huge success. However, most of our coverage has been in Catholic networks. It is our hope that the secular media will soon pick up on our movement.

Where we are now:

All deliveries by FedEx to the Pope and his Cardinals have been confirmed. Pope Francis interview printed in America Magazine is most encouraging. He truly seems to feel that he has been called to make changes in the Church: <http://www.americamagazine.org/pope-interview>. Today is the first day of Pope Francis meeting with his advisory council and will continue through October 3. We will listen to news reports and stand by ready for our response.

Challenges we face:

The challenge we face is to keep on keeping on since we have had and continue to have such a groundswell of response from across the globe. As new people join us who may be confused or

unclear about our history and process, the complete list of newsletters is available on our website: <http://www.catholicchurchreform.com/newsletters.html>. Reading these from the first to the most recent will provide a fairly complete explanation of how we have come together.

But we must ask ourselves how we can continue to improve our process and our communication. Within two weeks, Sept. 4 through Sept. 18, we accomplished the impossible and gathered over 100 church organizations together, backed by over 4 million members who have been signing petitions and supporting the reforms we outline in our letter. Represented by nine different countries, the drafting committee was able to present a letter, allowing us to speak with one voice, that all of these groups agreed to and signed. In order to accomplish this, we had to cut time corners and may again be in a position where we need to act swiftly or the opportunity will pass us by. We think we may be entering a new era where expediency supersedes process that may slow down our effectiveness. Let us commit together to do all in our power to move in a timely manner while also doing so with respect for the integrity of truly representing all of the signers.

Where we go from here:

October 1-3

Those listed as press contacts may be called upon if the media picks up the story of our movement. The previous prepared information – press conferences and press releases – should be helpful for these interviews.

October 3, 4 ...

Since we have no way of knowing whether Pope Francis or his cardinals will make any immediate public statement at the end of their meeting, we are preparing for all possible scenarios. They are going together to Assisi on October 4th, the feast of St. Francis.

Going Forward...

As you read some of the articles that came as a result of We Are Church in Europe, you will see that they did exactly what was hoped. They preserved their identity by announcing themselves as part of IMWAC (Germany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Ireland, France, Brazil, and our newest supporter, Austria). Respectively, this was also done with For Christ's Sake in Australia in their TV and radio interviews by Bishop Robinson and Bishop Morris. The difference is that each had the backing of over 100 church organizations worldwide with a membership of over 4 million who have over time supported the reforms raised. This accomplishes the goal raised by Joan Chittister, namely, that we not "sacrifice the leadership of each group to some kind of Uber-group....that our leaders should model together another way of being church...without competition, without distrust, without control. Instead," Joan suggested, "we need to raise a common voice on a single issue." In reading these articles and listening to the media interviews, I think you will agree that this has been accomplished and could well continue along these same lines from this point forward.

Depending on the desires and energy of the representatives who have joined together, we should be prepared to anticipate three alternatives to our missive:

- The Pope ***will respond positively*** in some fashion with perhaps an invitation to dialogue around the issues in the letter.

- The Pope *will respond neutrally* thanking us in some way for our efforts
- The Pope will *respond challenging some of our issues or not respond at all*

In all three instances, we need to be ready to respond. We want to demonstrate that we are not simply letter writers but individuals and church organizations who are ready to take an active role in the decision making of our Church. It seems wise to develop plans that have us one step that preserves the tone and tenor in a pro-active voice. To this end, we will invite members of our letter drafting committee and media professionals to begin this preparatory process now. On October 6th or 7th, we will send our next newsletter with a proposed draft of our next press release for your approval.