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September 17, 2015

To all who Support Pope Francis's Vision of a more compassionate Church:

As the 2015 Synod draws near, "We have to join our forces in order to reach a real breakthrough in this window of opportunity." [*Hans Kung, CCRI Consultor.*]

How do we do this?

Join our blog discussion

We invite you to participate in our blog called *The People Speak Out*, where you have the opportunity to share your own very personal story of how Church teachings have shaped your life . . . for better or for worse. Why stories? Because stories crawl inside you more than facts, figures, papal bulls, or dogmas. Stories are the way that Jesus touched (and changed) people. We believe that stories will put truth in front of the bishops and challenge them to seek new ways to address the very real issues facing individuals and families today.

Our blog issues include a variety of topics. If you are divorced and remarried, do you feel cut off from the Sacraments? If you are gay or lesbian, do you feel disenfranchised by the Church? If you are a woman, how have you been treated? Has the Church's teaching restricting artificial contraception had an impact on your life and marriage? If you are living with someone outside of marriage, do you feel welcomed to the Sacraments? If you were a priest and left because you fell in love, how has the obligation for celibacy impacted your life? If you left the Church, share the circumstance that led to your leaving and what, if anything, would it take to bring you back? We ask you to share your very personal story on any of these issues.

Click on either of the links below now. Pope Francis wants to hear your story and to have the Bishops hear them.

www.PopeFrancisCanYouHearUs.org



www.SynodBishopsCanYouHearUs.org



If you are part of an organization, please post these links on your website. And if you have difficulty with one or both of these links working, you may also use:

www.CatholicChurchReform.com/blog.

Share our Survey Results

Our [Jubilee Year of Mercy paper](#), entitled **The People Speak**, is a genuine reflection of the sense of the Faithful based on thousands who participated in our regional gatherings and surveys over the past two years. The survey results give an "ineffective" and sometimes "very ineffective" rating on Church hierarchy and the effects of their teachings on families today. Please join with us in getting this [Jubilee paper](#) out along with a [brief summary](#) on the most critical topics facing the Church today. We ask you to send both this [full report](#) along with our [2-page summary](#) to anyone who might have an influence on those attending the Synod:

With your assistance in getting this to be read, we hope to persuade a majority of the bishops to understand how, all too often, church teachings and practices have negative impacts on the quality of family life for millions of people. Simply put, through the comments and personal stories, we are asking the Synod to replace strict man-made rules with what Pope Francis is seeking: a more compassionate, welcoming, and nurturing approach to ordinary church teachings.

Support Pope Francis's Vision for the Church

You will gain an insight into the pope's vision of the Church and how he sees his role by [reading his pre-conclave comments](#) to the Cardinals the evening prior to his election in 2012. These comments may guide all reform organizations toward a more effective action plan. The pope is not going to dictate changes from the top down. He has made it clear that he wants his bishops to bring proposals to him. Individually, to solve current problems, each one of us must take on the role of addressing our local bishops to get them to ask the pope for what the people feel is needed in their locale. For example, it is likely that one bishop somewhere in the world will ask to allow for the acceptance of married priests or the appointment of a community leader because he has no other alternative to make the Eucharist available to the people. And, when this is asked, it most likely will be granted. That is how we envision Pandora's box will be opened - on a local level one region at a time. We encourage you to take this duty seriously. Address your local bishops. [Click here](#) to find the bishops attending the 2015 Synod from your region.

You can find both [The People Speak](#) and [The People Speak Out](#) on our home page: www.CatholicChurchReformIntl.org. Some organizations, with unique cultural needs, may prefer to write their own introduction and conclusion to *The People Speak*. You will find a clean version of our survey data report available on the CCRI homepage.

"...Until we raise a common voice, we will not only not be heard, we will not even be listened to....My hope is that by speaking out together - a strong chorus of calls for reform - we can provide a common, a clear, a strong and ongoing voice for the yet incomplete vision of Vatican II."
Sr. Joan Chittister, CCRI Special advisor

On Behalf of all of us at Catholic Church Reform International,
[Rene Reid](#), Director

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