



**For Immediate Release
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WORLD SYNOD OUTCOMES FALL SHORT IN ADDRESSING CLERICAL ABUSE CRISIS

Survivors Remain Overlooked as Church Fails to Take Meaningful Action

Rome, Italy, October 26, 2024 – As the World Synod concludes and Pope Francis addresses the public today, it is abundantly clear that the Church's efforts to confront the ongoing global crisis of clerical sexual abuse fall short of meeting the urgent needs of survivors. While the Pope has promoted synodality to foster dialogue and responsiveness, the glaring absence of meaningful change raises serious concerns. Survivors are further marginalized without concrete steps toward reform within Church governance, leaving the cycle of harm unbroken.

“Numerous investigations, including the Australian Royal Commission and the German mhg study, have repeatedly highlighted the systemic issues that facilitate sexual violence against hundreds of thousands of children and vulnerable adults,” stated Matthias Katsch, Founding Member of ECA Global. “The persistent imbalance of power between laity and clergy, a patriarchal structure, and regressive attitudes toward sexuality continue to undermine the Church's moral authority.”

Six years have passed since the Papal Summit on Clerical Sexual Abuse, yet survivors have not been placed at the center of discussions. Instead, they have often been treated as an afterthought. This flagrant neglect emphasizes the urgent need for accountability and genuine reform within the Church.

“As a survivor of clerical sexual abuse, I am appalled by the Church’s blatant indifference to our suffering. Vatican files remain sealed, and the so-called 'zero tolerance' policy announced by the Pope is mere rhetoric that lacks any substance,” asserted Gemma Hickey, Board President of ECA Global. “What we need is decisive action, not more empty promises.”

ECA Global is an international coalition of survivors and human rights advocates from over twenty-five countries across six continents, dedicated to holding the Catholic Church accountable for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. On November 18, members of ECA will gather in Rome to present a proposal aimed at implementing a genuine zero-tolerance policy within Church law, reinforcing the urgent need for real and lasting change.

For more information, please contact:

Europe – German/English/Spanish

Matthias Katsch (he/him)

ECA Founding Member

matthias.katsch@eckiger-tisch.de / +49 178 1674838

Italy – Italian/Spanish/English

Simone Padovani (he/him)
ECA Board Member
simon.padovani@gmail.com / +39 392 1454211

Canada – English

Gemma Hickey (they/them)
ECA Board President
gemmamhickey@gmail.com / +1 709 690 5244

U.S. – English

Tim Law (he/him)
ECA Board Member
timalaw@aol.com / +1 206 412 0165

Uganda – English

Janet Aguti (she/her)
ECA Board Vice-President
janetaguti1@gmail.com / +256 759 195484

Argentina – Spanish/English

Sergio Salinas (he/him)
ECA Board Member
sergiosalinas@gmail.com / +54 9 2615 11-6963

New Zealand – Māori/English

Murray Heasley (he/him)
ECA Board Member
murray.heasley@gmail.com / +64 22 393 6775

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