
Germany: German Bishops' Conference on abuse, "listening to those affected, supporting them and offering them protection"

The World Day of Prayer for victims of sexual abuse will also be held in Germany on the days around 18 November, the German Bishops' Conference announced in a statement today. "Sexual abuse has left many victims speechless. With our prayers, we would like to give a voice to them too", explained Bishop Helmut Dieser (Aachen), President of the Episcopal Commission for Issues of Sexual Abuse and Experiences of Violence. Together with prayer, however, "we must look and listen to the people affected, support them and offer them protection. As a Church, we want to be judged on this". For the Commission's Vice-President Stephan Burger (Freiburg), the Day is both "an opportunity to reflect and raise awareness" and to support the victims, but "prayer does not replace the necessary elaboration that must continue to take place in the Church". Archbishop Burger expressed his appreciation for the great strength of sexually abused people in talking about the suffering they have endured, and thus in instilling courage.

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