
Germany: Bishops' Conference invites to Day of Prayer for sexual abuse victims

The German Bishops' Conference (DBK) invites all the faithful in Germany to join in the Day of Prayer for victims of sexual violence. Launched at Pope Francis' suggestion in 2015, the initiative has since been held in proximity of the "European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse" that is celebrated on 18 November. In 2020, it is advised to hold it on Sunday, 15 November, or the following Sunday, 22 November, the Feast of Christ the King. The DBK stressed that the Day of Prayer is a voluntary sign of solidarity with those who have been victims of sexual abuse and must be lived as a contribution to raising awareness of this issue in the Church and in society". To help in the organization of community prayers, the DBK has posted prayer suggestions on its website as well as draft homilies with biblical and Gospel passages for priests, deacons and accredited lay people alongside testimonies of people who have been abused. The Bishop of Trier, Mgr. Stephan Ackermann, DBK representative for child abuse issues and issues related to the protection of minors and young people, calls on parishes and associations to experience this prayer "intensely": "In addition to our intense work of investigation and clarification, we do not want and must not forget the spiritual dimension of sexual abuse. With the Day of Prayer, we invite you to entrust yourselves to the power of prayer, especially for those situations where our human capacities are limited".

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