



THE INNOCENCE MISSION

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### **The Innocence Mission Reacts to Recent Catholic Church Abuse Scandals**

Orange County, CA – The founder of The Innocence Mission, a non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of child sexual abuse, is offering comments on the developing sexual abuse scandals within the Catholic church. In recent weeks these scandals have resulted in the resignations of bishops in several European countries, and have even touched the brother of Pope Benedict XVI, a Monsignor in the Church.

“It is heart wrenching to see these cover-ups and scandals continuing to appear all over the world,” said Elaina J. Kroll, founder and CEO of The Innocence Mission. “At the same time, it is only through full exposure and truth-telling that the scope of this silent epidemic will begin to be understood. In this regard I commend the press. As we work to empower victims, and parents of victims to address their experiences, we need to also understand the scope of the problem. This is part of our agenda at The Innocence Mission.”

Kroll founded The Innocence Mission after undergoing a lengthy legal battle with the Catholic Diocese of Orange County. Her perpetrator was a choir director at her church. “I did not found the Innocence Mission to point fingers or assign blame,” Kroll said. “We need to view these unfolding events as examples of the broader problem of shame and silence that surrounds child sexual abuse. This is not just a problem in the Church. It is a problem that touches every aspect of our society.”

One of the frustrating factors in raising awareness about the silent epidemic of child sexual abuse is that there are no national uniform reporting standards for the crime. “The chaos on the policy and legal fronts is very real, and severely hampers our ability to confront and combat this social crisis,” Kroll added. The Innocence Mission is planning a national opinion research study in the coming months that will explore the public’s true understanding of the issue.

The Innocence Mission has planned a number of public forums in the coming weeks to address various aspects of the problem of child sexual abuse. Details on these events will be forthcoming.

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