



ICRN
c/o St. Francois
26 Avoca Avenue
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September 26, 2019

Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki
President of the Polish Episcopal Conference
Skwer kard. Stefana Wyszyńskiego 6
01-015 Warszawa
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Dear Archbishop Gadecki,

We write to you as representatives of the International Catholic Reform Network (ICRN) which gathered in Warsaw from September 22-27, 2019. ICRN was founded in 2012 for the purpose of drawing together the best practices of communities around the world to bring about a Church that is welcoming and inclusive, reflecting and living the Gospel message so as to bring about the reign of God in our troubled world.

At the gathering representatives from 5 continents were saddened to hear about the controversies in Poland between the LGBT community and the Polish hierarchy.

When we learned that Bishop Wieslaw Mering of Wloclawek defended Professor Aleksander Nalaskowski who called LGBT people "Traveling Rapists," we felt that he did not follow the Catechism of the Catholic Church's mandate to treat lesbian and gay people with "respect, compassion, and sensitivity" (par. 2358).

The Equality Marches in Warsaw, Gdansk, Bialystok, and Poznan this year were opportunities for the Catholic bishops of Poland to show pastoral sensitivity for LGBT people. Instead the Archbishop Tadeusz Wojda of Bialystok described the Equality March as "an act of discrimination against Catholics." Such rhetoric, we believe, fueled, or perhaps instigated, the attacks of throwing

rocks and firecrackers, along with degrading slurs, against the marchers in Bialystok.

We would like to remind the Polish bishops of the 1986 statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which said, "It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech and action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs" (Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons).

We were appalled to learn that Archbishop Marek Jedraszewski of Krakow, on the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising, used the occasion to disparage LGBT people by saying that "a red plague is not gripping our land anymore" but that there is a new plague which is "not red, but rainbow" and that Poland is "suffering from a rainbow disease." Such remarks do not show respect for human beings who have been the object of discrimination and social intolerance.

We ask you to call upon the Polish bishops to comply with the Vatican's instruction that "The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, action and in law" and "to support with the means at their disposal, the development of appropriate forms of pastoral care for homosexual persons" (Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons).

Sincerely,

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