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Klaus Mertes

Breaking Through the Cycle of Failure

So That Coming to Terms with Abuse Doesn't End Up at the Start Again

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- Really coming to terms with the abuse
- Prominent authors on the topic
- Guide to the current debate

Since the sexual abuse at the Canisius College in Berlin came to light in 2010, the persons involved and the public experienced an avalanche of failed attempts by the Church to come to terms with it. That all of their efforts have not brought the complex situation closer to a solution so far is also frustrating for those responsible in the Church, especially the bishops. It would be too easy to attribute the continual failure to the mistakes of individual persons since this involves background dynamics in which not only the bishops are caught, but also large portions of the critical public. So it is important to understand these dynamics. This much is clear for Klaus Mertes: As long as the primary goal is to regain credibility, all efforts to come to terms with what happened will be counterproductive. They will always remain under suspicion of being strategically motivated in the interest of the institution. There is only one chance to break the cycle of failure: justice for the persons affected. But which path leads there?

About the author

Klaus Mertes, Jesuit, is the Rector of the Kolleg St. Blasien secondary school in the Black Forest. He teaches religion and Latin and is the editor of Stimmen der Zeit. He was previously the Rector of the Canisiuskolleg in Berlin. In 2010, he helped bring to light the abuse and cover-up scandal at the school that had far-reaching repercussions. In the meantime, it changed the awareness of the problem in the church and also in society worldwide.



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