

"I am writing to you to find out if, under your pontificate, priests like me can return home."



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In these first weeks of Leo XIV's pontificate, marked by gestures of simplicity, Augustinian references, and a promise to restore the Church's wounded unity, voices are echoing, calling for more than just words. InfoVaticana has obtained an open letter addressed to the new Pope by the American priest Gene Thomas Gomulka, who does not seek to provoke controversy, but rather to challenge it from a place of fidelity and suffering.

A priestly life cut short for denouncing abuse

Gomulka was ordained a priest in 1974 for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. For three decades, he served as a parish priest, military chaplain, and formator. He collaborated with Dominican priest Thomas Doyle in exposing sexual abuse and cover-ups among the clergy, which earned him retribution. Rather than remaining silent, he dedicated his life to supporting other victims and whistleblowers, turning his "ministry without a parish" into an agora of consolation and denunciation.

The letter: a cry and a question to the new Pope

In his lengthy letter, Gomulka poses a fundamental question to the Pope: Will Leo XIV be the Pontiff who cleanses the temple? He reminds him that his election generated hope, but also urgent questions, especially among those who have suffered abuse or been silenced witnesses. Among the points he raises are:

- The need to act against American bishops and cardinals accused of systematic cover-ups.
- The case of the Pontifical North American College in Rome, implicated in allegations of abuse and retaliation against seminarians.
- The continuation of priests and superiors in positions of authority despite credible accusations
- The failure of the Vos estis lux mundi mechanism for investigating bishops by their own peers.
- The urgency of listening to and restoring faithful priests who were punished for speaking out.

The letter is written from a place of pain, but also from a place of faith. Gomulka cites historical examples of Popes who ignored internal corruption and compares them with others who did not hesitate to purify the Church from within.

An opportunity for justice and unity

From the case of Father Marko Rupnik to the unanswered complaints of Peruvian and American victims, Gomulka reminds us that there is no true reform without justice. And that the unity proclaimed by Leo XIV cannot be built on silence in the face of the victims' pain. Far from demanding a specific agenda or assuming a vengeful tone, the canceled priest concludes with a humble request: to know if there is room, in the Church of Leo XIV, for priests who were canceled for speaking the truth.

The Open Letter can be read in its entirety in English at: **"Open Letter to Pope Leo IV."**

This article was published in Spanish at: <https://infovaticana.com/2025/05/15/le-escribo-para-saber-si-bajo-su-pontificado-los-sacerdotes-como-yo-podemos-volver-a-casa/>