



*Saint Catherine of Siena
Pray for us*

Catholic Laity

for Orthodox Bishops and Reform

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December 28, 2018
Feast of the Holy Innocents

Most Rev. Christophe Pierre
Apostolic Nuncio to the United States
3339 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008-3610

Re: Catholic Laity for Orthodox Bishops and Reform

Your Excellency:

We are the owners of two online petitions regarding the position of Archbishop of Washington. Winnie Obike started the petition <https://www.change.org/p/pope-francis-remove-cardinal-wuerl-now>. It now has more than 141,000 signers. Donna Bethell started the petition <https://www.change.org/p/archbishop-christophe-pierre-cardinal-tobin-must-not-be-made-archbishop-of-washington-before-investigation>. It has almost 7,000 signers. Emails concerning these petitions and requesting a meeting with you were sent on October 22 and November 12. We have not yet had the favor of a reply.

We have now formed Catholic Laity for Orthodox Bishops and Reform (Catholic Laity). Our purpose is to secure a worthy shepherd for the Archdiocese of Washington and to establish communications among Catholic laity, the U.S. hierarchy, and the Holy See for matters concerning Catholic life in the United States.

At the general meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops last month, there were many avowals of the need for the Bishops to work with laity. You yourself made this point in your address to the Bishops, recognizing the need for listening to and collaborating with the laity in order to carry out their mission as Shepherds.

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Catholic Laity now offer ourselves as willing collaborators. We are not trying to replace the Bishops, or change doctrine or praxis, or make appointments ourselves. We are simply trying to bring our experience of the Church and our needs to the attention of our shepherds. We recognize our right and duty to do this under Canon 212. You can play a vital leadership role by setting an example to demonstrate the readiness of the representative of the Holy See to meet with us.

A meeting with you will be important not only in establishing communications generally with the hierarchy, but especially in addressing the immediate need to secure a worthy shepherd for the Archdiocese of Washington. This is an appointment of national and, indeed, global significance. The Archbishop of Washington holds a preeminent position in the U.S. hierarchy, in U.S. public life, and in the universal Church. We need a strong leader in the Faith to meet the almost unprecedented challenges the Church is facing in the United States and globally.

We pray for your mission among us and thank you for your fidelity. May God bless you with joy in His coming Incarnate and give you abundant blessed fruits in your work.

Sincerely yours,



Winnie Obike



Donna F. Bethell

cc: His Eminence, Pietro Parolin
His Eminence, Marc Ouellet
His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo