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Mahony: I feel 'humiliated,' 'disgraced'

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LA abuse cases

Cardinal Roger Mahony, the retired archbishop of Los Angeles who was been publicly disgraced in past weeks over his handling of priests accused of sex abuse in the 1980s, has written that he is "asking for the grace to endure the level of humiliation."

"Given all of the storms that have surrounded me and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles recently, God's grace finally helped me to understand," Mahony writes in a post on his blog last night.

"I am not being called to serve Jesus in humility," he continues. "Rather, I am being called to something deeper -- to be humiliated, disgraced, and rebuffed by many."

Mahony, who is 76 years of age, is expected to travel to Rome in coming days to attend the meeting of cardinals that will elect the next head of the Roman Catholic church following Pope Benedict's pending resignation Feb. 28.

The current archbishop of Los Angeles, Jose Gomez, announced [1] Jan. 31 Mahony would "no longer have any administrative or public duties" in the Los Angeles archdiocese because of his shielding of priests accused of sex abuse in the 1980s.

Gomez's announcement came as the archdiocese released some 12,000 church files detailing Mahony's actions in those cases as part of a court order.

Mahony responded Feb. 1, saying [2] Gomez had "not once" raised the issue with him.

Writing on his blog yesterday, Mahony says he was "not ready" for the outcry of criticism he has faced since the documents' release.

Referring to Wednesday's start of the Christian season of Lent, Mahony continues: "Ash Wednesday changed all of that, and I see Lent 2013 as a special time to reflect deeply upon this special call by Jesus."

"To be honest with you, I have not reached the point where I can actually pray for more humiliation," Mahony writes. "I'm only at the stage of asking for the grace to endure the level of humiliation at the moment."

Made a cardinal in 1991, Mahony retired as Los Angeles' archbishop in 2011, when Gomez succeeded him.

Mahony continues [3] in his blog:

> In the past several days, I have experienced many examples of being humiliated. In recent days, I have been confronted in various places by very unhappy people. I could understand the depth of

their anger and outrage--at me, at the Church, at about injustices that swirl around us.

Thanks to God's special grace, I simply stood there, asking God to bless and forgive them.

Over the coming days of our Lenten journey I hope to explore with all of you some deeper spiritual insights into what it really means to take up our cross daily and to follow Jesus--in rejection, in humiliation, and in personal attack.
Strangely, the more I allow all of this to unfold without protest and objection, the greater the inner peace I feel.

Kyrie, eleison!

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