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Pope Francis and four bishops stand in a circle with bowed heads as they make the sign of th

Pope Francis and four French bishops make the sign of the cross during silent prayer for the victims of abuses committed by members of the clergy, prior to the pope's general audience at the Vatican Oct. 6, 2021. The bishops were visiting Rome following a report on sexual abuse in France that estimates more than 200,000 children were abused by priests since 1950, and more than 100,000 others were abused by lay employees of church institutions. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

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It is not enough to ask people who have suffered abuse for their forgiveness, Pope Francis said.

They also must be offered "concrete actions to repair the horrors they have suffered and to prevent them from happening again" as well as the truth, transparency, safe spaces, psychological support and protection, the pope said in a video message released by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network March 2.

"The church must serve as a model to help solve the issue and bring it to light in society and in families," he said.

At the start of each month, the network posts a short video of the pope offering his specific prayer intention. For the month of March, the pope dedicated his prayer intention for the victims of abuse. Child Abuse Prevention Month is observed in April in the United States.

In his video message, the pope said, "In response to cases of abuse, especially to those committed by members of the church, it's not enough to ask for forgiveness."

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"Asking for forgiveness is necessary, but it is not enough. Asking for forgiveness is good for the victims, but they are the ones who have to be 'at the center' of everything," he said.

"Their pain and their psychological wounds can begin to heal if they find answers -- if there are concrete actions to repair the horrors they have suffered and to prevent them from happening again," Francis said.

"The church cannot try to hide the tragedy of abuse of any kind. Nor when the abuse takes place in families, in clubs, or in other types of institutions," he said. In fact, the church must be a model to help shine light on and remedy the problem.

"The church must offer safe spaces for victims to be heard, supported psychologically and protected," he said.

"Let us pray for those who have suffered because of the wrongs done to them by members of the church; may they find within the church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering," he said.