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New York City vigil: about 75 march in support of sisters

by Alice Popovici



(Francis Piderit)

About 75 people marched up and down 5th Avenue in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City early Tuesday evening (May 15), holding signs and singing hymns, in one of many prayer vigils planned nationwide in support of Catholic sisters criticized by the Vatican in a recent report, according to one of the event organizers.

"Our hope was to call the attention of Cardinal Dolan to the strong support the sisters have among Catholics in the U.S.," said Francis Piderit, a business owner and a member of Voice of the Faithful in New York. He said those involved in the vigil hope that Dolan will use his influence to call on the Vatican "either to revoke the mandate or ameliorate it in some way."

Tuesday's events marked the second week of vigils organized by members of Catholic groups throughout the country, as part of a grassroots effort led by the Nun Justice Project. The vigils were originally planned for every Tuesday evening in May, leading up to the first meeting of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious on May 29, but dates and meeting times changed as more cities were added.

"There's such a strong sentiment in support of the nuns, and a sense of outrage that they would be, really, slandered by the doctrinal assessment," Piderit said. "It effectively categorizes a whole class of wonderful women with some very extreme language."

It doesn't withstand scrutiny," he added, in reference to the assessment.

For a full list of locations where vigils were planned Tuesday, and information about future vigils, go here.

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