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French clergy sexually abused over 200,000 children since 1950, report finds

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French Catholic Church inquiry finds 216,000 pedophilia cases since 1950

Who investigated the Church abuse?

- A commission was established by Catholic bishops in France at the end of **2018 to shed light on abuses and restore public confidence in the church at a time of dwindling congregations.**
- It has worked independently from the church.
- **Jean-Marc Sauve** was the head of the commission that compiled the report.

The Grim Details

- The Commission report highlights
 - French clergy sexually abused more than **200,000 children over the past 70 years**
 - The church had shown "**deep, total and even cruel indifference for years,**" protecting itself rather than the victims of what was systemic abuse.
 - According to the commission most of **the victims were boys, many of them aged between 10 and 13**



The Grim Details

- The commission itself has identified **around 2,700 victims through a call for testimony, and thousands more had been found in archives.**
- However, other wide-ranging studies by research and polling groups estimated there had been around 216,000 victims, and the number could rise to 330,000 when including abuse by lay members.
- The commission has highlighted that there have been around **2,900-3,200 suspected paedophiles in the French church over the last 70 years.**

The Reactions

- **Pope Francis**
 - Pope Francis reacted to the devastating report, expressing “great sorrow”. “His thoughts turn first to the victims, with great sorrow for their wounds and gratitude for their courage in speaking out.”
- **Head of the French conference of bishops, Eric de Moulins-Beaufort**
 - “The Church is ashamed. We ask forgiveness and we promise to act.”
- **The Commission**
 - The Church must take responsibility for what happened and ensure reports of abuse are transmitted to judicial authorities. The Church must check the criminal record of any person assigned to be in regular contact with children or vulnerable people, and provide priests with adequate training.

Is this new?



Child sexual abuse in Catholic church 'swept under the carpet', inquiry finds

Leader of church in England and Wales refusing to resign despite damning IICSA report

The British Catholic Church had received more than **900 complaints** involving over 3,000 instances of child sex abuse in England and Wales between 1970 and 2015, and that there had been more than 100 reported allegations a year since 2016.