

CALL AND PETITION FOR FINANCIAL OPENNESS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

Sponsored by the Greater Philadelphia Voice of the Faithful, P. O. Box 4397,
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Some reasons why this petition is being circulated for signature:

In March 2007, Cardinal Rigali announced that he is contemplating a major fund drive to coincide with the upcoming celebration of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's 200th anniversary, even though:

1. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia has not issued a financial report of any sort for the faithful since a 2002 report which was distributed a year after the 2002 fiscal year ended;

2. The Catholic faithful should have a right to know how their hard-earned contributions to the Church are being used and to expect fiscal accountability, openness and transparency about Church finances, just as they expect these from other organizations to which they contribute. The most appropriate method of providing this accountability is through an audit performed by an independent Certified Public Accountant;

3. The moral authority and credibility of the Church and its leaders, which has heretofore been a basis for the faithful not requiring transparency, has been severely eroded by revelations of sexual abuse by priests, but more importantly by the actions and decisions of the bishops, who not only covered up the abuses, but also enabled abusers to continue to abuse children by transferring priests to new assignments without informing the faithful in the new parish or school of the complaints against the priests. ;

4. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in its Manual on "Diocesan Financial Issues" states: "...the Ordinary of each Diocese should issue particular law to provide periodic communications to the Christian-faithful concerning the financial positions and the results of activities... This particular law(s) should provide that these periodic financial reports be in a format and provide reasonable information to enable the Christian-faithful to understand and appreciate the stewardship ... exercise(d) with respect to the funds entrusted to them by the Christian-faithful.";

5. The Archdioceses of Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Boston, Milwaukee and many others have made available their independently audited financial reports through the world wide web and can be reviewed by the faithful readily.