**Suggested Text  
ADVOCACY for reduction of clericalism in light OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE SCANDAL**

1. *Please edit the text to express your feelings.*
2. *Choose a recipient(s) from the list of suggestions.*
3. *Sign your name.*
4. *Send to your chosen Church leader(s).*

Salutation,

An increasing body of evidence signals some church doctrine and procedure as significant root causes of sexual abuse by clergy. Specifically, I believe a chief actor in the scandal is the persisting church culture of privilege and superiority defined by Pope Francis as *clericalism*.

While clericalism has many elements defined by many people, it is clear unnecessarily elitist priestly formation is one of them. To the extent of the elitist measures employed, I believe the resulting clerical society suffers an atmosphere of entitlement and exclusion. I note, as just one example, many ways that priests choose to distinguish themselves from the laity. Such instruction would seem to run directly counter to the precepts of the Second Vatican Council.

While I do not understand the deliberately traditional direction of priestly formation in some dioceses, I *do* understand the formation process is under your direct scrutiny and control in ours. I am writing to affirm your personal warmth and positive influence on your flock as the body of Christ, and to respectfully request your continued and careful scrutiny of our priestly formation process.

I pray you remain willing to work to reduce clericalism in all its forms as a contributor to sexual abuse, and for the sake of our church.

Sincerely and respectfully,