



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Call To Action takes on Bishop Dewane of SW Florida

Over 35 demonstrate in front of the Bishop Dewane's Office, 1000 Pinebrook Drive, Venice Church workers unfairly fired. Defamation, interference and harsh restrictions charged to Bishop. Bishop Dewane refuses to meet with the people.

CTA Southwest Florida and representatives from National CTA, Catholics working for justice and inclusion, prayed for the people and demonstrated against the injustices of Bishop Frank Dewane, the bishop responsible for Catholics of Southwest Florida, from Naples to Sarasota/Bradenton.

"At least 26 people have been unfairly fired from their jobs or quit because of working conditions in the Venice Diocese," declared Ellen McNally of Southwest Florida Call To Action. "We cry out to God in our pervasive frustration, our intense anger and our abiding hope for our Church."

In addition to the firings, Bishop Dewane has insisted that groups, such as Mother of God House of Prayer, Call To Action and the Catholic Assembly of Southwest Florida, not refer to themselves as Catholic, restricted them from parish property, required that all speakers be approved by the bishop and banned progressive Catholic scholars and theologians from speaking in the diocese.

"Bishop Dewane's 'profiling' of individuals associated with Call To Action is discriminatory and unjust," charged Lena Woltering, chapters organizer for National Call To Action. "Call To Action National will no longer allow bishops to go unchallenged in their vilification of our organization. Canon Law #212 affirms the obligation of the laity 'to make their opinions regarding the good of the church known to their bishops and other church members.'"

"We will not be deterred," she continued in her letter to Dewane. "Ignoring us we will not make us disappear. In refusing to meet for dialogue, the bishop is violating the rights of the Christian Faithful. We will expose the oppression and injustice as long as it continues."

Although Dewane was in the building, his staff said he was in a meeting. The demonstrators emphasized their right to hold the bishop accountable.

Southwest Florida CTA was founded in 2003. They demonstrate actively for fair immigration rights, share in feeding the homeless, bring in national speakers and participate in the Southwest Florida Catholic Assembly to be held March 20 in Sarasota. www.swfla-cta.org

Call To Action (CTA) is a Catholic movement working for equality and justice in the Church and society. An independent national organization of over 25,000 people and 53 local chapters, CTA believes that the Spirit of God is at work in the whole church, not just its appointed leaders.

Visit our website at www.cta-usa.org.