

An open letter to Pope Francis: Speak to the evils of public registration and perpetual punishment

written by NARSOL | September 18, 2015

By Robin Vanderwall . . . There is a great evil in our land that goes ignored: the public pillory of people who have been convicted of sexually-based offenses long after they have been released from lawful punishment.

Consequent to several pieces of national legislation going back to 1992, every state in the United States is required to publicize the names and addresses of individuals who were convicted of a sexually based offense, no matter how minor the offense may have been, and no matter how long ago the incident occurred.

In the majority of cases, the individuals—and families—who are affected have already satisfied the requirements of a legal punishment. However, they remain exposed to a multitude of dangers and deprivations resulting from the continuous publication of their sexual sins. Often times, restrictions imposed upon where they may live or work or attend school cause them to live as exiles within their own homeland.

To date, nearly 800,000 Americans are listed on state-maintained public sex offender registries. This globally accessible database of information creates the impression that such people are monstrous individuals who are a present and immediate danger to their communities and are highly likely to re-offend at any given moment.