

April 24, 2007 – Letter, New York Times – Response to Egan interview

To the Editor:

In your profile of Cardinal Egan, we see the next crisis of the Catholic Church with terrible clarity. Cardinal Egan's arrogant dismissal of financial accountability, stating that he is selectively "transparent to the best possible people," is the same blindness that enabled abusive priests to move among parishes unchecked.

In a recent survey, 85% of US dioceses participating reported embezzlement schemes within the past five years. In 2005, two members of Voice of the Faithful, including one of the undersigned, met with archdiocesan CFO William Whiston to ask why the New York Archdiocese has not published financial statements for many years. Mr. Whiston committed to publishing complete and audited financial statements by August 2005. We have yet to see statements of any kind. Cardinal Egan's haughty comments now explain why: Ordinary Catholics need not apply for financial information.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops recommends that "administrators are to render an account to the faithful concerning the goods offered by the faithful to the Church." Unlike the solid reporting being done by Brooklyn, Boston and other dioceses, the Catholic Church in the financial capital of the world cannot produce the simplest public account of its stewardship. Voice of the Faithful calls on Catholics to withhold funds from the Cardinal's Appeal until audited financial statements are released.

Sincerely,

Mary Pat Fox
National President, Voice of the Faithful

Francis Piderit
Chairperson, Voice of the Faithful NY