



PONTIFICIA
UNIVERSITÀ
GREGORIANA

Centre for
Child Protection



PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF MINORS

Centre for Child Protection
Centro de protección de menores
Zentrum für Kinderschutz
Centro per la protezione dei minori
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PRESS RELEASE – Immediate

Attn: Newsdesks, Photodesks and Religious Affairs Correspondents

SAFEGUARDING IN HOMES AND SCHOOLS: LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE WORLDWIDE

23 MARCH 2017 – 9:30 / EDUCATION SEMINAR

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors [PCPM], in collaboration with the Centre for Child Protection of the Pontifical Gregorian University, is hosting a global seminar on safeguarding and education, with a particular focus on Latin America.

Guest speakers from Argentina, Colombia and Mexico will be joined by experts from Australia and Italy to share their experience of promoting a culture of safeguarding in Catholic schools, institutions and communities.

A round table discussion with the participation of experts from the Pontifical Gregorian University; the Pontifical Salesian University; and the Pontifical Faculty for Education Science *Auxilium* will address the urgent need for research in this area.

Participants will also hear from the Under-Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education will also address the seminar and take part in discussions.

The event will take place in the Aula Magna of the University on 23 March 2017, and will be chaired by **Cardinal Seán O'Malley, OFM Cap**, and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

Education is key

The PCPM has identified education as a core element of its work. In every part of the Church – parishes, dioceses, schools, homes, communities, seminaries, religious congregations and the Holy See itself – people need to understand:

- the risks to children and vulnerable adults
- how to recognise the warning signs of abuse
- how to educate children and vulnerable adults to protect themselves and find help when they need it
- how to create safe environments in the church and communities to prevent abuse

The PCPM is engaged on a wide range of work to promote and support education of Church leaders and all other areas of the Church's work with children and vulnerable adults.

The education seminar will bring together experts from schools, child safeguarding, psychology and education science, as well as practitioners and students, to share and learn from information and experience on what works and what doesn't. The outcome will form the basis of the PCPM's future plans for research and education programmes.

The speakers are:

Fr Friedrich Bechina, FSO, Undersecretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education

Kathleen McCormack, Member of the Commission and Chair of the Working Group on Education of Families and Communities

Lic Alexandro Aldape Barrios, Consejo Nacional de Educación Privada, México

Fr Wilfredo Grajales Rosas, SDB – Director del Instituto Distrital para la Protección de Niños, Niñas, Adolescentes y Jóvenes, Bogotá, Colombia

H. Juan Ignacio Fuentes, Provincia Marista Cruz del Sur, Argentina

Francis Sullivan, CEO, Truth Justice and Healing Commission, Australia

Dott. Giovanni Ippolito, Direttore Tecnico Capo Psicologo, Questura di Foggia

Fr Hans Zollner SJ, President, Centre for Child Protection, Pontificia Università Gregoriana and Member of the Commission

Sr Prof.ssa Giuseppina del Core, Preside, Pontificia Facoltà di Scienze dell'Educazione *Auxilium*

Fr Prof Mario Oscar Llanos SDB, Università Pontificia Salesiana

“We can never have enough education”

Kathleen McCormack, the Chair of the PCPM’s Working Group on Education in Schools and Families, said:

“In the Church we have volunteers, employees, educators and clergy; and of course we need to reach out to families and children themselves. We want people to understand about how to create safe environments and prevent sexual abuse.

“We in the Pontifical Commission want to get this debate going, and provide leadership on how we educate all those people who are in different countries and cultures, but are still part of the Universal Church. We want to make sure that all their people who are in their communities or dioceses are fully on board with making the Church a safe place.”

Background

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors was created by Pope Francis in March of 2014. The Chirograph of His Holiness Pope Francis states specifically, “*The Commission’s specific task is to propose to me the most opportune initiatives for protecting minors and vulnerable adults, in order that we may do everything possible to ensure that crimes such as those which have occurred are no longer repeated in the Church. The Commission is to promote local responsibility in the particular Churches, uniting their efforts to those of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, for the protection of all children and vulnerable adults.*”

Information

Journalists/editors/photographers wishing to attend the event are requested to register online, indicating their news organisation:

→ https://research.tutelaminorum.va/survey_wg3/educationalseminar

For all media enquires please contact:

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