



PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR THE  
**PROTECTION OF MINORS**

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**PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Attn: News desks and Religious Affairs Correspondents*

**22 APRIL 2018**

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM) met this week in Plenary Assembly in Rome.

The first day of the meeting was dedicated to hearing from members of the Survivor Advisory Panel (SAP) of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission from England and Wales. The gathering was part of the PCPM's ongoing commitment to ensuring that the thoughts and contributions of people who have been abused inform all aspects of the Commission's work.

The visitors said that the experience of being listened to so carefully by the Commission members was empowering. They could see that their sharing, and putting victims first, had an impact on the Commission.

One of the SAP members said: *"I hope our visit will help the PCPM to develop a wider network of survivors who are willing to advise and support the ongoing work of the Commission in a similar way."*

The PCPM is grateful to the SAP group for generously sharing their expertise and experiences with the Assembly. This will help the Commission to develop effective ways to integrate the voice of survivors into the life and ministry of the Church.

During their Plenary Assembly, the PCPM heard presentations on ‘The outcome of the Australian Royal Commission’; on ‘The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child’ and on ‘The role of Faith Communities in overcoming abuse trauma’.

On Saturday 21 April 2018, Pope Francis received the Members of the Commission in a private audience. The Holy Father stated his intention to definitively confirm the Commission’s Statutes.

Members spoke to the Holy Father about their priorities, which are reflected in the following Working Groups:

- Working with Survivors
- Education and Formation
- Safeguarding Guidelines and Norms

The Working Groups are an integral part of the Commission’s working structure. Between Plenary Assemblies, these groups bring forward research and projects in areas that are central to the mission of making the Church ‘a safe home’ for children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults.

The Plenary Assembly concluded on Sunday 22 April.

## 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.”*

*For more information on the work of the Pontifical Commission visit our website at [www.protectionofminors.va](http://www.protectionofminors.va)*