

Chirograph of the Holy Father Francis for the Institution of a Pontifical Commission for the Protection of minors (22 March 2014)

The effective protection of minors and a commitment to ensure their human and spiritual development, in keeping with the dignity of the human person, are integral parts of the Gospel message that the Church and all members of the faithful are called to spread throughout the world. Many painful actions have caused a profound examination of conscience for the entire Church, leading us to request forgiveness from the victims and from our society for the harm that has been caused. This response to these actions is the firm beginning for initiatives of many different types, which are intended to repair the damage, to attain justice, and to prevent, by all means possible, the recurrence of similar incidents in the future.

For these reasons, and after having received the counsel of many cardinals and members of the college of bishops, together with other collaborators and experts in these matters, I decided to continue the work begun by my Predecessors by establishing a permanent Commission attached to the Holy See. The aim of the Commission is to promote the protection of the dignity of minors and vulnerable adults, using the forms and methods, consonant with the nature of the Church, which they consider most appropriate, as well as through their cooperation with individuals and groups pursuing these same objectives.

As I had the opportunity to highlight during an encounter with several victims of sexual abuse, I rely on the members of this Commission for the effective protection of minors and vulnerable adults, regardless of religion they profess, because they are the little ones on whom the Lord looks with love. To my collaborators in this work, I ask for all efforts possible to assist me in responding to these needs of these little ones.

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.

It is for all these reasons that I have instituted the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

All that is established with the present *Chirograph* has full and stable effect, anything to the contrary notwithstanding, even if deserving of special mention.

Given in Rome, at the Apostolic Palace, 22 March 2014, the second of my Pontificate.

FRANCISCUS PP

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