



PRESS RELEASE

Rome, January 24, 2012

Church leaders from across the world come to Rome to relaunch their commitment to the safeguarding of the vulnerable with a new global initiative: "Towards Healing and Renewal"

Bishops and Religious Superiors from across the world will come to Rome in February for the launch of the Catholic Church's global initiative on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Towards Healing and Renewal is being offered by the Gregorian University in Rome and consists of a major symposium followed by the launch of a multi-institution e-learning centre which will run for the next three years – the Centre for the Protection of Children based in Munich, Germany. Delegates for the symposium will come from about 110 Bishops' Conferences and also be superiors of more than 30 Religious Orders, making this a truly international gathering focusing on safeguarding by the Catholic Church.

This initiative has the support of several Vatican Congregations as well as the Secretary of State and the symposium, which will run from February 6-9, will have speakers from all continents in recognition of the global nature of safeguarding the vulnerable. The speakers include the testimony of a victim of abuse, who will address the delegates about the need for victims to be heard and how to effect positive change. Full details of the symposium and the speakers are available on the website thr.unigre.it.

Following the 2011 circular letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to Bishops' Conferences requiring all Dioceses in the world to develop guidelines within the next year on the handling of all abuse allegations, the symposium will play a significant role in enabling Bishops and major religious superiors to move towards creating a consistent global response. Cardinal Levada, Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith, will give the opening address at the Symposium conference, and representatives from the CDF have had a very active role in giving shape to Towards Healing and Renewal.



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The e-learning centre based in Munich (Germany), more formally known as the Center for Child Protection of the Institute for Psychology of the Pontifical Gregorian University, which will be run by Hubert Liebhardt, Visiting Professor at the Gregorian University as well as serving at the University of Ulm, has full funding secured for three years. It will enable the dissemination of good practices to assist in the setting up of local structures to introduce robust procedures to deal quickly and effectively with all allegations of abuse and will go live at the conclusion of the symposium.

“Towards Healing and Renewal” will also act as a catalyst in developing a culture of listening and healing within the Church.

Media notes

- There will be a press conference at the Gregorian University on Friday 3 February from 16:00 – 17:15. Piazza della Pilotta, 3 00187, Roma. Building: Palazzo Frascara, Room 007

The speakers will be

- Rev. François-Xavier Dumortier SJ, Rector of the Gregorian University;
- Rev. Hans Zollner SJ, chair of the symposium planning committee;
- oMs. Marie Collins, who will be speaking at the symposium about giving a voice to victims of abuse;
- Msgr. Charles Scicluna, Promoter of Justice, CDF; Rev Federico Lombardi SJ.

Press facilities will be available throughout the symposium at Palazzo Frascara of the Gregorian University (room F007), with all addresses available and speakers, participants and symposium organisers available for interview. Requests for interview during the symposium will need to be made to Alexander DesForges. For press accreditation to both the press conference and the symposium itself go to the website thr.unigre.it. Press accreditation is essential for all those who wish to use the press facilities during the symposium as well as attendance at the Press Conferences. Confirm at thr@unigre.it before February 1st, 2012.

- There will be a press conference on 9 February launching the Center for the Protection of Children from 16:30-18:00.



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Speakers will be:

- Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archdiocese of Munich
- Prof. Dr. Jörg Fegert, Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of Ulm University Clinic
- Prof. Dr. Hubert Liebhardt, Director for the Center for the Protection of Children
- Cornelia Quennet-Thielen: Undersecretary, German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- Fr. Federico Lombardi, Director, Office for the Vatican Press

Editors' Notes

For further information on Towards Healing and Renewal :

All Press Representatives are asked to confirm their attendance at any of the Press Conferences and/or during the Symposium before February 1st, 2012 at thr@unigre.it.

Symposium website: thr.unigre.it

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