

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **An Unlikely Alliance: Survivors and Clergy Call for a Universal 'One Strike and You're Out' Church Mandate on Abuse and Cover-Ups**

**WHAT:** At a news conference in Rome to mark the United Nations' World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse, a diverse group of survivors, advocates and theologians will unveil a landmark zero-tolerance proposal calling for sweeping reforms to Canon Law, aimed at confronting the Catholic Church's ongoing clergy sexual abuse crisis head-on.

**WHEN:** Monday, November 18, 2024, at 11:00 AM (local time)

**WHERE:** Inside the Villa Aurelia, Via Leone XIII, 459, 00165, Rome

**WHY:** Nearly six years after the first Papal Summit on Clerical Sexual Abuse, the Catholic Church has yet to fully implement the measures that were proclaimed at that time to protect children and vulnerable adults, and to hold Church leaders accountable. Pope Francis has repeatedly declared a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, but his intention must be met with meaningful action. Real progress within the Church, on a global level, will only occur through consistent implementation of its own principles. The recent "Annual Report" from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors underscores the urgency for a shift in mentality—from self-defensiveness to accepting legal, moral, and spiritual responsibility. It also highlights the pressing need for proactive, well-resourced safeguarding measures.

**WHO:** ECA (Ending Clergy Abuse), a global coalition of survivors and human rights advocates from over 25 countries, and IADC (Institute of Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care), a research institute at the Pontifical Gregorian University focused on human rights and safeguarding within the Church, are co-leading this initiative. Also involved are Eckiger Tisch, a German non-profit supporting survivors and advocating for justice, and Bishop Accountability, a U.S.-based watchdog that has been documenting the worldwide Catholic abuse crisis since 2003.

**BACKGROUND:** The proposal follows extensive discussions at an historic three-day summit in Rome last June, where a select group of survivors, advocates, clergy, scholars, lawyers, and state representatives reached consensus on a zero-tolerance mandate for clergy sexual abuse. This mandate, which aligns with United Nations recommendations and the findings of state-sponsored investigations, outlines sweeping reforms aimed at eliminating abuse and enhancing transparency within the Church.

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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