



3rd Annual Report Truth, Justice and Healing

Giving an account of the commitments made
regarding care for victims of abuse and the creation
of safe environments

*Prepared by the “Interdepartmental Commission”
of the General Directorate
of the Legionaries of Christ*

March 30th, 2023



LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST

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I.

Introduction

I. Introduction

With this 3rd *Annual Report: Truth, Justice and Healing*,¹ the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ renders an account of the progress made in fulfilling its commitment to the victims of sexual abuse and to the creation of safe environments. With the publication of this report we have in mind firstly the victims who have suffered sexual abuse², both known and unknown. We assured them and their families that, “we want conversion and to make reparation with concrete actions.”³ We also address the Legionaries of Christ, whom “the Lord calls to heal the wounds of so many victims of abuse.”⁴ We address all members of Regnum Christ, the Church, and society, whom we also ask, “help us to carry out the decisions expressed in this Communiqué.”⁵ We owe it to everyone, and to them all we address this 3rd *Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing*.

In 2022, our work focused on attention to victims, responding to any complaint as standard procedure, strengthening the accompaniment process and the consolidation of independent channels for listening, receiving and attending to victims. Furthermore, we began implementing the “Reparation and Support Program” for victims, which is comprehensive and includes economic compensation and other types of

2022

Two main steps have been taken: Attention to victims and the implementation of the “Reparation and Support Program”

1 The present 3rd *Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing* has been prepared by the “Interdepartmental Commission” of the General Directorate of the Legionaries of Christ, which combines the General Secretariat, the Department for Priestly Life, and Department for Safe Environments, and the Communications Office. The publication was authorized by the general director, after having heard the opinion of the General Council. Three other reports on the same topic have already been published: *1941-2019 Report* (December 2019), the 1st *Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing* (March 2021), and the 2nd *Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing* (March 2022). All three previous reports can be found on 0abusos.org

2 Cf. GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST 2020, *Protect and Heal*, Glossary: “Sexual abuse of a minor: contact or interaction between a minor and an adult in which the minor is used to sexually stimulate the adult. The crime always occurs when an adult commits acts of a sexual nature with a minor. The Church establishes the legal age as 18 years old. In the civil sphere, the definition of a minor varies from one nation to another, according to current legislation. Crimes against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue that consist in: a. forcing someone, with violence or threats or by abusing authority, carry out or suffer sexual acts; b. carrying out sexual acts with a minor or vulnerable individual; c. producing, showing, possessing or distributing child pornography, including recruiting or inducing a minor or vulnerable individual to participate in pornographic exhibitions.”

3 General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ 2020, *Conversion and Reparation*, 1.

4 *Conversion and Reparation*, 14.

5 *Conversion and Reparation*, 15.

reparation. In this way, it seeks to alleviate in part the terrible mark left by sexual abuse.

On the other hand, in order to consolidate the Safe Environments team and department, the Congregation hired a lay professional with extensive experience in the field, with specific studies in law and the protection of minors, to take charge at the international level and continue with this task, which includes continuing to promote the collaboration of external institutions and experts and the training and professionalization of the coordinators at the global level.

This work is permanent and continuous. Each year it is condensed into a report, which, in addition to specific progress, includes what has been developed and achieved in previous years, as well as a compilation of timelines and other topics that are maintained in each edition as a historical memory. Therefore, the texts of this report also reflect the substantial continuity of the work of recent years and the openness to new impulses and initiatives.

Lastly, the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ wishes to reaffirm its commitment to renewal, listening, accompaniment and healing, seeking the necessary means, including this report, to respond to the pain and suffering that were caused, being accountable and making known the actions it has taken and to which it is committed.

Interdepartmental Committee
General Directorate
of the Legionaries of Christ



II.

Toward a
Culture of Zero
Abuse: 17 years
of gradual
progress

II. Toward a Culture of Zero Abuse: 17 years of gradual progress

In order to give context and update the progress that has been made up to March 2023, and in continuity with previous reports, we present a timeline of the actions that have been taken in the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ to prevent and fight against abuse and on behalf of the victims. A more detailed version of this timeline can be found in Appendix I of the Report.

Toward a Culture of Zero Abuse in the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ

2006 to 2014

Became aware of and accepted the reality of the sexual abuse committed by the founder and other members of the Congregation and the need to care for the victims. Implementation of Church regulations (*Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela*) and safe environment standards in several countries. Apostolic Visitation of the Congregation followed by the period of the Pontifical Delegate, Card. Velasio De Paolis (2010-2014).

2011-2013

Commission for outreach to the victims of Fr. Marcial Maciel. First investigation into the phenomena of abuse by members of the Congregation and first publication of the corresponding data and policies for prevention.

2014

General Chapter:
Petition for forgiveness from the victims and public commitments.

2014-2018

Implementation of means to prevent abuse from happening again:
Creation, implementation, and external audit of an international safe environment policy.

2019

What exactly happened?
In-depth investigation of the history of all cases that occurred in the Congregation.

2019 (December)

Historical Report 1941-2019
Publication of the results of the historical investigation – how many cases, when, and where they occurred.

2020 (February)

The General Chapter publishes:

- **Conversion and Reparation:** a public acknowledgment of errors, petition for forgiveness, and commitment to cultural change.
- **Protect and Heal:** strengthening of the international policy on safe environments, the information policy, and promotion of institutional collaboration.

2021 (March)

Publication of the First Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing 2020:
Rendering an account of care for victims and the publication of each individual case.

2022 (March)

2nd Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing 2021:
Rendering an account of care for victims. Guide for financial reparation.

2023 (March)

3rd Annual Report Truth, Justice and Healing.
Third report on the progress toward the commitments made by the Legionaries of Christ. Start-up of the Victim Support and Economic Reparation Program.



III.

Progress in the
Congregation's
2020-2026
Commitments

III. Progress in the Congregation's 2020-2026⁶ Commitments

In the following section, we offer an account of the fulfillment of commitments since the *2nd Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing* (March 2022). Each specific commitment is presented at the beginning of each section and then the steps taken in the last year.

A. Care for the Victims

Commitment for 2022: Respond to any allegation according to established procedures and strengthen outreach to victims with whom there is still no contact.

Response to allegations

Since the historical investigation and the publication of its results in the *1941-2019 Report*, the Congregation has received allegations for 11 new cases of sexual abuse of a minor, of which:

- In three cases no sexual abuse of a minor was verified.
- One priest was expelled from the Congregation and from the clerical state.
- Two priests await the conclusion of both civil and canonical trials.
- One is awaiting the conclusion of a canonical trial.
- Four are under canonical investigation prior to an eventual canonical trial.

Furthermore, new claims, allegations and formal declarations have been received within the canonical proceedings of priests who had already been published in the various reports in relation to events of past decades.

⁶ Cf. *1st Annual Report: Truth, justice, and healing* (March 2021), p. 24. This refers to the commitment the Legion made in its last General Chapter in 2020. The next General Chapter will be held in 2026.

On the other hand, one case, mentioned in the 1941-2019 Report, is awaiting the results of a police investigation.

The updated statistics can be found on the webpage [Oabuse.org](https://oabuse.org).

An independent channel to listen to, receive, and assist victims

The Congregation continues to seek and pursue paths of truth, justice and healing for each victim, respecting the particular situation and timing of each individual. This applies even when the cases are already legally closed.

Since 2020, the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ has been in stable collaboration with Eshma, an external and independent institution whose members include therapists, social workers and jurists who are experts in restorative justice⁷. This collaboration, together with other independent channels⁸, takes place in the places where the Congregation is present and has made it easier to offer victims appropriate reception and accompaniment.

As of the publication of this report, Eshma is serving 42 victims of members of the Congregation, 11 of whom initiated contact after the publication of the 2nd Annual Report (March 2022). 29 of these individuals have reported sexual abuse suffered as minors and 2 others as adults; and 11 individuals reported abuses of power and of conscience.

For the victims who come forward, we seek to facilitate paths that respond to their particular needs to obtain recognition, truth and reparation to help heal the consequences of the abuse

Active outreach to victims on behalf of the Congregation

As was mentioned in the previous *Annual Report*, in addition to an independent institution to receive and accompany the victims who come forward on their own initiative, the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ has also made contact with some victims of sexual abuse that it is aware of, while seeking in every situation to respect the tempo of each of the victims.

Attention to Victims

Eshma attends 42 victims of members of the Congregation. In addition, there is a team at the General Directorate of the Congregation that follows up on each territory and ensures that they have the support and resource required to attend victims in a personalized way.

⁷ For more information on Eshma, visit: <https://eshma.eus/>

⁸ An updated presentation of the channels for listening can be found at [Oabusos.org](https://oabusos.org). As an example, in Mexico there exists a channel for “anonymous tips”, operated by Deloitte, and in Italy the Congregation collaborates with the channel for listening of the Diocese of Rome.

There is a team in the General Directorate of the Congregation dedicated to this follow-up in each territory⁹, and it ensures that they have the support and means necessary to care personally for the victims who desire to receive this care in the different countries where they reside.

Thanks to the openness and trust of the victims and to the means that are being put into place, the Congregation has been able to connect with more than 60 of the estimated 170 known victims of priests of the Congregation.

The Congregation is willing to establish pathways of healing with the victims, respecting their personal timing, their willingness to interact directly or indirectly with the Congregation, and seeking to overcome the existing difficulties in the measure that this is possible, as some victims have already passed away

B. Financial Reparation and Support for Victims

Commitment for 2022: Follow up and strengthen the program for financial reparation and support for victims of sexual abuse by priests of the Congregation¹⁰.

In the 2nd *Annual Report*, the then newly designed program of economic reparations and support for victims was presented. It was developed after an international comparative study of other systems and standards. This international and permanent reparations program harmonizes civil and canonical procedures and systematizes victim assistance, including financial reparations among the various types of reparations offered.

When a person contacts one of the institutional reporting channels or an independent channel¹¹ with allegations, these channels receive them, accompany and inform them of the possible ways to proceed. In addition to ensuring the allegations are reported to civil and ecclesial authorities for their proceedings, will receive assistance in recounting their experience, finding therapy, and expressing the needs they might have, including financial reparation. Where possible, the reparation will take place in a broader process of restorative justice that seeks to contribute to the complete healing of the victim.¹²

9 By "territory" we mean a geographic area where the Congregation is present. This could consist of a country or one or more countries under the government of superior of the Congregation.

10 Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 6.

11 Contact information is found on the last page of this report.

12 Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 3, 6 and 11.

The program has been implemented throughout the past year and is offered through the channels for listening, and in participation with the committees for reparation. As of the current date, committees for reparation have been established in the Territory of Mexico (2022) and the Territory of Spain (2023). Throughout the past year, the guidelines established in the program for reparation have been followed in 11 cases.

The Congregation is aware that no amount of reparation can compensate for or make the damage caused by abuse disappear. Nevertheless, it seeks to offer a complete reparation to help restore justice and ease the healing process for the victim. The Congregation believes that financial reparation, with care and accompaniment, can help to alleviate, at least somewhat, the weight carried by those who bear this wound. According to our records, since 2010, 32 victims of sexual abuse have received financial reparation, assistance with therapy and/or support for living expenses.

Reparation and Support

A comprehensive reparation and support program has been put in place and so far 11 cases have been handled according to the principles established.

REPARATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

of the Legionaries of Christ for victims of sexual abuse

Oabuse.org

Where possible, the reparation will take place in a broader process of restorative justice that seeks to contribute to the complete healing of the victim. It consists of the following elements:

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Defined after an international study comparing similar programs



A VICTIM-CENTRIC PROCESS

Seeking to contribute to the healing of the victims and avoid re-victimization and delays. It does not take the place of civil and canonical justice.



COMMITTEES OF REPARATION

They work independently and fix the reparation. Made up of at least three experts. If possible a survivor of abuse or a family member should participate. In the event of a vacancy, the substitution requires a positive majority opinion of the remaining members of the committee.



FOUR TYPES OF REPARATION

- Support for recovery or therapeutic treatment
- Financial for the damage suffered
- Subsidization for a subsistence living allowance
- Other types of institutional support (restorative encounters, etc.)



NO CONDITIONS

The victim does not have to maintain silence or renounce legal actions or future claims.



PARAMETERS FOR REPARATION*

- Gravity of the abuse
- The age of the victim
- Lack of care or preventative action on the part of the institution

*If a subsequent civil trial considers an amount greater than the reparation provided as just, the reparation will be augmented to the amount that was determined to be just.



Oabuse.org

C. Follow-up of Ongoing Canonical Procedures

Commitment for 2022: Follow up on ongoing canonical proceedings according to the instructions that the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith gives in each case, constituting the corresponding tribunals and ensuring the participation of external canon lawyers as judges and advisers.

The abuse of a minor is a crime that is prosecuted both in the civil sphere under the authority of the state, and canonically under the authority of the Church. The Congregation cooperates with both authorities. During the proceedings, we seek to maintain an appropriate flow of information with those who have filed complaints and with the accused priests. Over the past year, changes have been introduced in the close and continuous care given to them, in order to correspond more and more to the need for all those involved to be aware of every step of the process.

In the 2nd *Annual Report*, six ongoing canonical proceedings were reported. During the past year, three of these cases were concluded and three were not. Of the three that were concluded, all with the intervention of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, one priest was dismissed from the clerical state, another will not exercise public priestly ministry, and the case of the third, who no longer belongs to the Congregation and does not have public priestly ministry, was closed for now because it was not possible to reach the necessary certainty about what happened.

During the past year, seven new canonical proceedings have been initiated, including formal investigations and trials. Therefore, at present, there are a total of 10 canonical proceedings in progress, which implies due restrictions on the public ministry of these priests until what happened is clarified and their case is concluded.

All of the known cases of priests who have committed abuse and remain in the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ have already been presented to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith for their instructions on how to proceed or are still the object of a previous investigation.

For more information, please consult the webpage Oabuse.org.

External Accreditation

During 2022, six of the nine territories that make up the structure of the Congregation have been accredited, two will be starting the process and one has its own measures for prevention and intervention according to the guidelines given by the civil and ecclesial authorities of the those countries.

D. Impeding an Investigation or Grave Negligence

Commitment for 2022: With external experts, examine possible evidence of concealment or grave negligence with respect to past cases of abuse and enact corresponding processes.¹³

During 2022, an independent investigation was carried out by a judge of a diocesan canonical tribunal in Mexico to analyze the actions of the major superiors in the management of a known case¹⁴ of abuse of minors prior to 1992. In the first report on this case, published in 2019, the Congregation had already made known the serious deficiencies in the field of prevention, response to complaints, care for victims and sanctions for whoever had committed the abuses. The purpose of the new investigation was to determine possible personal responsibility on the part of the superiors of the Congregation, beyond the Founder, who was Superior General at the time of the abuses.

The investigator presented his comprehensive report to the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of the Holy See, and to the Director General of the Legionaries of Christ, who was asked to give his opinion on the case. Currently, the case is awaiting indications from the Dicastery in order to reach a resolution. The procedure followed, the evaluation of the various factors involved, and the conclusions reached will provide important guidelines for dealing with similar situations in the future.

E. Accreditation Processes

Commitment for 2022: Conclude the processes of external accreditation or reaccreditation of safe environment standards that are underway in several territories.

As part of the process of ongoing improvement in complying with safe environment standards, during 2022 progress continued to be made with the external audit of safe environment protocols in each territory¹⁵ to ensure compliance with the professional standards¹⁶ of Praesidium¹⁷, an internationally recognized organization in the prevention of child sexual abuse.

¹³ Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 8.

¹⁴ Cf. <https://legionariesofchrist.org/case-from-the-territory-of-mexico-fernando-martinez-suarez/>

¹⁵ Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 13-16, 21.

¹⁶ <https://www.0abuse.org/accreditation-standards-2020/>

¹⁷ Praesidium is a company with extensive experience in the creation and accreditation of safe environments. Cf. <https://www.praesidiuminc.com/>

Of the nine territories that make up the Congregation, six are accredited (Chile-Argentina, Colombia-Venezuela, Spain, Mexico-Central America, Northern Mexico and North America). The Territory of Western and Central Europe has adopted the prevention and intervention measures issued by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the respective countries that comprise it and is subject to the corresponding commitments and review mechanisms. In addition, it has just begun the accreditation process for Praesidium. The Italian and Brazilian Territories are preparing to begin their accreditation process.

On the other hand, and as part of compliance with safe environment standards, the Congregation has been professionalizing this area in order to generate actions for prevention, response and attention to victims:

- The Legionaries of Christ's Safe Environments Department has appointed a new international director with extensive knowledge of the area, as well as specific training in the field of law and the protection of minors. With her professional experience, she will contribute effectively to the institutionalization of this department while enriching it with her point of view as a lay person. She will also continue to form a professional team of safe environment coordinators in the different territories.

- At the time of publication of this *3rd Annual Report*, each territory has a safe environment coordinator and a specialized work team in permanent training¹⁸.

- In October 2021 there was an international meeting of the safe environment coordinators¹⁹. The principal themes were listening to, receiving and accompanying victims, the steps on the pathway to cultural change to prevent abuse, current canonical legislation and the measures established by Pope Francis to address the culture of zero abuse globally.

¹⁸ <https://www.0abusos.org/prevencion/>

¹⁹ Cf. article published in: <https://legionariosdecristo.org/ambientes-seguros-un-compromiso-de-todos/>

F. Collaboration with External Institutions and Experts

Commitment for 2022: Expand collaboration with external institutions and experts, as well as establish forums for consultation with survivors of sexual abuse for the continuous improvement of the Congregation's work in this area.

The Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ recognizes that, in order to achieve continuous improvement in the care of victims of sexual abuse, it is necessary to count on the support and collaboration of external institutions and experts to foster adequate paths of healing.

In addition to the already-established collaboration with the independent channel Eshma, where we have had the support of experts in restorative dialogue, reception of victims and psychological care, we have also continued with training on the awareness and understanding of the victims and the appropriate ways to accompany them.

This year, training meetings held in various communities have led to a growing awareness and understanding of victims, the pain involved with abuse, and the best way to accompany them. At the individual level, Legionaries in all countries have participated in various training courses, given in 2022 by civil and ecclesiastical institutions: CEPROME and Reparare of the Anahuac University in Mexico, the Desarrollo y Persona Institute of Francisco de Vitoria University, Reparare and CONFER in Spain, the Episcopal Conferences of Germany, Chile, Spain, the United States and France; and Eshma, Praesidium (Armatus) and the Union of Superiors General at the global level.

In several cases in 2022 the investigations and the canonical processes have been carried out in part or completely by professionals independent of the Congregation. In addition, particular consultations have been made with experts in canon and civil law, and in the phenomenon of sexual abuse of minors.

For the care of victims and handling of cases, lay professionals from different disciplines (medicine, psychology and victim care, among others), some of them international experts, are now involved in advising and accompanying the implementation of prevention and supervision policies.

External Collaboration

In addition to the permanent collaboration with the independent channel Eshma, members of the Congregation have received specialized formation with institutions such as CEPROME, Reparare, CONFER, as well as the bishops conferences of Germany, Chile, Spain, United States and France; Praesidium and the Union of Superiors General.

G. Abuse of Authority and Conscience

Commitment for 2022: Address the issue of abuse of authority and conscience, as noted by the General Chapter²⁰.

So far, cases of abuse of authority and conscience have been dealt with individually, every time Legionaries or other persons have been approached directly or through an independent channel, thus initiating paths of healing, institutional conversion and reconciliation.

For the year 2023, the Director General has decided to form a commission to address this issue in a global and systematic way, as requested by the General Chapter in the Chapter Decree 2020: “We ask the General Government to analyze this complex reality and to propose appropriate measures in view of pastoral formation, prevention of any kind of abuse and healing of the persons concerned.”²¹

20 GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST 2020, [You will be my witnesses](#), 21: “The priestly ministry demands that we have the highest respect for the dignity and freedom of every person redeemed by Christ. Having recognized with sadness that here too there have been some abuses of power and conscience in the exercise of authority and in our apostolic activity, we ask the General Government to analyze this complex reality and to propose appropriate measures in view of pastoral formation, the prevention of any type of abuse and the healing of those affected.”

21 *Idem*.



IV.

Commitments
for 2020-2026

IV. Commitments for 2020-2026

Throughout 2022 there was progress in several of the commitments that the Congregation established. Nevertheless, there is still a long path to take in search of truth, justice, and healing for the victims. Therefore, we commit to continue on this path and to prioritize the following commitments:

- 1° Respond to any allegation according to the established procedures and strengthen the active outreach to victims with whom there is still no contact.
- 2° Follow up on and strengthen the program for financial reparation and support for victims of sexual abuse by priests of the Congregation²².
- 3° Follow up on ongoing canonical proceedings according to the instructions that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith gives in each case, constituting the corresponding tribunals and ensuring the participation of external canon lawyers as judges and advisers.
- 4° In 2023, begin an external audit of the work carried out and reflected in the reports that have been published.
- 5° With external experts, examine possible evidence of concealment or grave negligence with respect to past cases of abuse and enact the corresponding processes²³.
- 6° Carry out the processes of external accreditation or reaccreditation of safe environment standards that are underway in several territories.
- 7° Expand collaboration with external institutions and experts, and establish forums for consultation with victims of sexual abuse for the continuous improvement of the Congregation's work in this area.
- 8° Address the issue of abuse of authority and conscience, as noted by the General Chapter: "We ask the General Government to analyze this complex reality and to propose appropriate measures in view of pastoral formation, the prevention of any type of abuse and the healing of those affected²⁴.

In the next annual report, the Congregation will make known the most significant progress on an international level in the fulfillment of these commitments.

²² Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 6.

²³ Cf. *Protect and Heal*, 8.

²⁴ GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST 2020, [You will be my witnesses](#), 21.



Appendix:

Detailed timeline

Appendix - Detailed timeline

Steps taken before 2021

Awareness and acceptance of the sexual abuse committed by the founder and other members of the Congregation and the need to care for the victims. Beginning of the implementation of Church regulations (Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela) and of safe environment standards in certain countries. The intervention of the Holy See, the canonical visit, and the naming of a Pontifical Delegate helped the Congregation to become aware of the abuses committed by its founder, Fr. Maciel, and of their effects in the Congregation. Codes of conduct and procedures began to be implemented in the United States and Ireland, countries where the problem began to be addressed with greater urgency and seriousness following the indication of the episcopal conferences. An initial study was made of the cases known at the time and the interim general director published the results.²⁵

Commission for outreach to the victims of Fr. Marcial Maciel. The Pontifical Delegate, Cardinal Velasio De Paolis, instituted the “Commission for Outreach” that cared for the victims of Fr. Maciel who decided to come forward. This commission presented its results to the General Chapter in 2014.

2014 General Chapter: Petition for forgiveness from victims and recognition of the grave misconduct of Fr. Maciel. The General Chapter of 2014 recognized the grave misconduct of Fr. Marcial Maciel and asked victims for forgiveness in the name of the Congregation.²⁶ Furthermore, it asked superiors to:

- continue seeking reconciliation with victims of abuse;
- implement the international policy of safe environments for minors and vulnerable individuals;
- accredit their safe environment procedures through specialized and independent institutions.

²⁵ [Statement of the Extraordinary General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ about the path of renewal that we are traveling](#)

²⁶ [Presentation of the Communiqués of the General Chapter 2014](#)

2014-2018 Development, implementation, and external audit of an international safe environment policy. Father Eduardo Robles-Gil, LC, then General Director, concentrated his efforts on prevention and responding to any allegations – signs, indications, and information... - through the crafting and implementation of an international safe environment policy²⁷ which must be audited in every country by independent specialized institutions. Furthermore, there was some outreach to victims of members of the Congregation to initiate processes of healing and reparation.

2019 Historical investigation of the cases that occurred in the Congregation. A commission was established to investigate the archives and any existing documents to identify all the cases of abuse that occurred in the Congregation in all parts of the world from its foundation to the present. It sought to understand the reality of abuse in the Congregation with greater precision to begin a real process of outreach, listening, and reparation with victims, ensure that the guilty receive civil and ecclesiastic legal sanctions, and proceed towards a change of institutional culture.

2019 (December) Publication of the results of the historical investigation: 1941-2019 Report.

The [Report 1941-2019 on the Phenomenon of Sexual Abuse of Minors in the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ Since its Foundation](#). This was a key step, with its limitations, toward defining this painful reality, and permitted:

- **A historical investigation.** Cases of abuse committed by priests of the Legionaries of Christ between 1941 and 2019 were collected.
- **An analysis of the phenomenon.** An analysis and diagnosis of the phenomenon of abuse of minors in the Congregation was carried out, identifying the specific context and cultural causes which, in each case, facilitated abuse. It was clear that historically the response of the Congregation was often characterized by an attitude of institutional defensiveness more than care for the victims.
- **The centrality of the victim.** Victims could be asked for forgiveness with greater truth, recognizing the harm they suffered, and strengthening our commitments and policies to ensure that the victim is at the center of all pathways of healing.
- **Distribution of information.** To accept responsibility and act on a global level, a public commitment to present the findings of the investigation to the highest governing body of the Congregation, the General Chapter, was made.

²⁷ Cf. *1941-2019 Report*, p. 8-9.

2020 (February). The General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ was celebrated, the highest governing body of the Congregation, which represents it in its totality . The Chapter published two documents.

- **Giving an account of care for victims and publication of cases and names.** The document [*Conversion and Reparation*](#) was published, directed primarily to victims of abuse and their families, it made an explicit request for forgiveness from each victim and recognized the allegations of the victims as a prophetic good. This document:
 - **Recognized concrete errors and committed to correcting them.** It recognized “with pain and shame” the failures and errors that permitted abuse and the inadequate way these crimes were addressed. The Congregation committed to correcting its errors.
 - **Asked the victims for forgiveness.** It mentioned the first accusers of Fr. Marcial Maciel by name, retracted the negative judgments that were made against them, recognized that their allegations regarding truth and justice were prophetic, asked them for forgiveness for the pain they suffered, thanked them for the good they have done the Congregation and the Church itself. It also asked each of the victims who suffered abuse at the hands of a member of the Congregation for forgiveness.
 - **Invited us to a cultural change in order to seek to encounter victims.** It invited the members of the Congregation to examine their consciences regarding their commitment to reach out to victims.
 - **Recognized the role of the press and other institutions as indispensable allies.** It recognized civil and ecclesiastic authorities, society, channels of communication, and organizations that specialize in prevention of abuse and restoration of justice as indispensable allies.

- [*Protect and Heal*](#)
Strengthened the international safe environment policy and the information policy, and promoted institutional collaboration.
This normative document strengthened the international safe environment policy promulgated in 2014. Some of the key points are:
 - **Institutional collaboration.** It promoted collaboration with other ecclesiastical and civil organizations to eradicate the scourge of sexual abuse of minors.
 - **Fight against impunity.** It established clear sanctions for those guilty of not reporting or impeding correct actions in the case of sexual abuse.
 - **Expulsion from the priesthood and from the clerical state for the guilty.** In addition to sanctions for abuse, it requested that

the normal procedure would be to ask the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to enact the punishment of dismissal from the clerical state and expulsion from the Congregation for those who have committed multiple or repeated abuses.

- **Strengthening of international safe environments policies. Normative.** It strengthened: the principles and protocols of action to respond quickly, efficiently, and pastorally to allegations or claims of a possible case of sexual abuse; healing and reconciliation with the victims of abuse; preventative measures and safe environments; the publication of the cases of Legionaries guilty of abuse.

[2021 \(March\) 1st Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing.](#)

Gave an account of care for victims and publication of cases.

This first annual report of the Legionaries of Christ included, among other things:

- **Rendition of an account: social audit.** It gave an account of concrete actions in the search for truth, justice, and healing for the victims of sexual abuse against minors by members of the Congregation²⁸ and in the creation of safe environments in our institutions since the 2020 General Chapter.
- **Publication of each case in different ways.** It explained the reasons and ways that the names and individual cases of Legionary priests known to have committed abuse are published on a provincial level in different countries.
- **Receiving, listening, and prioritized care for victims through an independent institution of experts.** It presented the partnership of the Congregation with Eshamá, an institution of professionals dedicated to victims of abuse in the Catholic Church, which offers an external independent channel for receiving and caring for the victims of members of the Congregation through different programs.
- **Preparations for a program of financial reparation.** It explained the progress made toward financial reparation for victims and advances in the safe environment policy put into place in 2014.
- **Publication of the commitments for 2021.** It made seven public commitments regarding points that it will give priority to throughout 2021.
- **Updating the information and data on Oabuse.org.** It updated the data that the *Report 1941-2019* presented.

²⁸ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, 28.

2022 (March) *2nd Annual Report: Truth, Justice, and Healing*
Giving an account of care for the victims. A program for financial reparation

2023 (March): 3rd Annual Report Truth, Justice and Healing.
- Third rendering of accounts on the commitments made.
- Start-up of the Victim Reparation and Support Program.

Contact information



Institutional reporting channel:
<https://www.0abuse.org/report/>



Independent victim support channel (Eshamá):
eshma.eus, escuchamos@eshma.eus,
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