

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

[May 2023]

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM)

Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (CEPR)

Conference of Major Superiors (COSUMAR)



PARTIES

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors

and

The Episcopal Conference of Rwanda

and

The Conference of Major Superiors of Rwanda

- i) Whereas the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, in Article 78, §1 establishes the ministry of safeguarding as a specific and permanent activity of the Roman Curia;
- ii) Whereas the Supreme Pontiff enumerated to the Commission “I urge you to assist the Conferences of Bishops – this is very important: to assist and oversee in dialogue with the Conferences of Bishops – in establishing suitable centres where individuals who have experienced abuse, and their family members, can find acceptance and an attentive hearing, and be accompanied in a process of healing and justice” (Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Commission, 29 April 2022);
- iii) Whereas the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, in Article 78, §2 establishes the Commission’s mandate to “assist diocesan/eparchial bishops, Episcopal Conferences and Eastern Hierarchical Structures, Superiors of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and their Conferences in developing appropriate strategies and procedures, through Guidelines to protect minors and vulnerable persons from sexual abuse”;
- iv) Whereas the Supreme Pontiff, explicitly instructed the Commission “on an annual basis, to prepare a report on the Church’s initiatives for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.” (Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Commission, 29 April 2022);
- v) Whereas the Supreme Pontiff outlined that “This report will be a factor of transparency and accountability and – I hope – will provide a clear audit of our progress in this effort. Without that progress, the faithful will continue to lose trust in their pastors, and preaching and witnessing to the Gospel will become increasingly difficult.” (Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Commission, 29 April 2022);
- vi) Whereas the Motu Proprio *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, in Article 2, §1 requires “institutions or offices that are easily accessible to the public for the submission of reports. The reports are to be submitted to these ecclesial institutions and offices”;
- vii) Whereas to “propose better methods to enable the Church to protect minors and vulnerable persons and to assist the healing of survivors, in the recognition that justice

and prevention are complementary” (Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Commission, 29 April 2022); establish by this Memorandum of Understanding a collaboration in which they agree to jointly pursue the realization of the Canonical, spiritual, pastoral, and human rights requirements, surrounding the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.

INTRODUCTION

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (Commission) hereby sets out to establish a Memore Program (MP) in Rwanda, in collaboration with the Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (CEPR), and the Conference of Major Superiors of Rwanda (COSUMAR), initially financed by the Commission’s Memore Fund. This MP is designed to:

- Provide outreach to victims and survivors (V/S) of abuse and receive them in a safe environment, by providing material and human resources in a stable and accessible structure. In this pursuit, it will listen and care for persons who have experienced abuse, facilitating reporting in a non-judgmental and discrete environment.
- Assist the needs of V/S, their family and community by offering pastoral, medical, legal and informational support to persons impacted by primary and secondary abuse. This assistance will be offered through providing referral services, for professional treatment, free of charge for V/S. As such, the MP might help V/S access local resources and professionals, while also monitoring the effectiveness of these services.
- Enhance and facilitate access to reporting systems for V/S, consistent with Article 2 of the *Motu Proprio Vos Estis Lux Mundi*. Promote and oversee follow-up communications, after the submission of a report to afford V/S information on the status of their reports.
- Provide advanced formation courses to specialized staff, focusing on safeguarding practices and philosophy, while still considering locally, personally, and culturally sensitive aspects of the material. The primary objective of these courses will be to train safeguarding practitioners in the local church, to lead the creation of a safe environment for all involved. It will also form Church authorities on their engagement and communications with survivors.
- Provide basic formation courses to the wider Church community, especially all clergy, religious, lay movements, Catholic school teachers, Catholic hospital operators, etc. The

primary objective of these courses will be to train the whole local church on the safeguarding paradigm so as to promote an integral culture of protection.

- Commemorate the experiences of V/S to elevate social consciousness and promote healing, to recognize, acknowledge, and honour their experiences without stigmatization.
- Develop tools and initiatives to spread understanding of the existence and extent of the phenomenon of abuse, to facilitate protective measures, and to publicize these initiatives by the Church.

KEY PARTIES

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (Commission)

The Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (CEPR)

The Conference of Major Superiors of Rwanda (COSUMAR)

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (Commission) will:

- i) Establish the general criteria for the MP and provide oversight, over MP activities and deliverables
- ii) Provide specialized materials, advice and oversight from its expert Members, for the various components of the MP
- iii) Promote and facilitate a collaboration among the actors in this MoU, and subsequent Memorare Plan, by supporting and encouraging the One Church collaborative model, underpinning the MP
- iv) Collect and highlight the experiences and testimonies that emerge in the activities of the MP, through quarterly reporting requirements, to include in the Commission's Annual Report, and in its recommendations to other local Churches, to dicasteries of the Holy See, and to the Holy Father
- v) Provide the MP with information about good practices formulated by the Universal Church in the protection of minors and vulnerable adults
- vi) Screen and certify candidates for the position of Memorare Advisor (MA), responsible for the mapping and designing of the MP
- vii) Administer the Memorare Fund (MF) to:

- i) Provide the CEPR with initial grant money to fund:
 - a. A consultancy contract for a Memorare Advisor (MA) to:
 - i. Negotiate and establish a collaborative LLC, to house the MP
 - ii. Map safeguarding programs and stakeholders in Rwanda
 - iii. Develop customized training curriculum and materials
 - iv. Develop a sustainable business plan, detailing all cost and revenue streams, proposing cost sharing models as appropriate
 - v. Recruit, nominate and train all qualified personnel to work in the MP
 - vi. Ensure communication between the Commission's African Regional Group and the MP, for reporting on the activities of the MP, as well as its financial and impact performance
- ii) Provide additional grant funding to the Memorare collaborative LLC, based on the needs outlined in the sustainable business plan, produced by the Memorare Advisor

2.0 The Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (CEPR) will:

- i) Submit potential MA candidates to the Commission, for pre-approval
- ii) Appoint 1 member to the Memorare Advisor Collaborative Selection Committee, to select a MA from the Commission's list of pre-approved candidates
- iii) Promote and facilitate a collaboration among the actors in this MoU, and subsequent MP, by negotiating and signing onto the collaborative partnership, to financially and legally sponsor the MP
- iv) Provide space for the MP to carry out its services, either within existing properties owned by the CEPR or in a separate space to be secured
- v) Appoint members to the Board of Directors of the collaborative LLC, to oversee the MP's operations, consistent with the One Church collaborative model
- vi) Provide the MA with a list of Diocese-owned and/or operated Catholic institutions (e.g., schools, health facilities, retreat centers, etc.) whose staff will be subjected to mandatory training by the MP
- vii) Support the faithful workings of MP, to hire staff, and undertake any loans provided in the sustainable business plan
- viii) Comply with quarterly reporting requirements to be stipulated in the MP's statutes

3.0 The Conference of Major Superiors of Rwanda (COSUMAR) will:

- i) Submit potential MA candidates to the Commission, for pre-approval
- ii) Appoint 1 member to the Memorare Advisor Collaborative Selection Committee, to select a MA from the Commission's list of pre-approved candidates
- iii) Promote and facilitate a collaboration among the actors in this MoU, and subsequent MP, by negotiating and signing onto the collaborative partnership, to financially and legally sponsor the MP
- iv) Provide space for the MP to carry out its services, either within existing properties owned by the Religious or in a separate space to be secured
- v) Appoint members to the Board of Directors of the collaborative LLC, to oversee the MP's operations, consistent with the One Church collaborative model
- vi) Provide the MA with a list of Religious-owned and/or operated Catholic institutions (e.g., schools, health facilities, retreat centers, etc.) whose staff will be subjected to mandatory training by the MP
- vii) Support the faithful workings of MP, to hire staff, and undertake any financing mechanisms to support the long-term viability of the MP
- viii) Comply with quarterly reporting requirements to be stipulated in the MP's statutes

SIGNED BY:

The Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors

Signature 

Name: Sean Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap.

Date: May 9th 2023

The Episcopal Conference of Rwanda

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

The Conference of Major Superiors of Rwanda

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____