

Sexual Abuse by a consecrated member of the Focolare Movement in France

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FOCOLARE ENTRUSTS THE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE CASE OF ABUSE PERPETRATED BY A FORMER CONSECRATED MEMBER IN FRANCE TO THE FIRM GCPS CONSULTING

On 23rd December Maria Voce and Jesús Morán, respectively President and Co-president of the Focolare, entrusted the investigation into the sexual abuse committed by JMM, a French, former consecrated member of the Movement, to the firm GCPS Consulting, based in the United Kingdom.

Acknowledging the immense suffering, primarily for the victims, the Focolare is collaborating unconditionally in order to shed full light on this case, as expressed by the President in the press release of 22 October last. The decision has also been announced to entrust the investigation and ascertainment of responsibilities to an independent body. GCPS Consulting is a consulting firm that specializes in helping organisations ensure the safety of children, vulnerable or 'at risk' groups and improve their systems for preventing and reporting abuse.

It deals with the identification of risks and issues related to safeguarding, and has extensive experience and expertise in policy development, training, review, evaluation, as well as investigations. The task of **GCPS Consulting** will therefore be to listen to the victims and gather further testimonies, as well as carry out investigations into any omissions, cover-ups or silences by the leaders of the Focolare Movement.

In addition, it will gather other reports that may come to light. The investigation is expected to start in January 2021. The independent commission, after the time needed to establish terms and procedures, will begin gathering the stories of the victims in March 2021. By December 2021 a public report will be presented which will detail the findings and recommendations of the inquiry commission.

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