



SCHOENSTATT FATHERS

Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio

General Superior

Berg Sion 1 | 56179 Vallendar | Germany

+49 261 6504-110 | +49 1575 9109379

jpcatoggio@gmail.com

Communique about Francisco José Cox

In the context of the recent formal accusations made to the civil and church authorities, and published in the Chilean media, against the archbishop emeritus of La Serena, and a member of our Institute, Francisco José Cox, we wish to communicate the following:

1. From his time in La Serena, we know of various testimonies – published by the media and through conversations and meetings – that refer to abusive situations committed by Francisco José Cox. As a result of the formation that we subsequently received on how to prevent abuse and accompany the victims, we declare that at the time we did not respond appropriately to the situation. The Congregation for Bishops, to which he was responsible in his episcopal role, can now also evaluate the way it responded at the time.
2. Bishop Francisco José Cox renounced his duties in the Diocese of La Serena in 1997, and then took up various administrative tasks assigned by the Vatican, in Rome, and CELAM (Latin American Bishops' Conference), Columbia, and has been retired since 2002 of all public activities and left Chile.
3. In 2002, the Congregation of Bishops in Rome asked the Institute of the Schoenstatt Fathers to receive him in one of their houses. For this reason, he has been living in the central house of our community in Germany for many years.
4. The photographs that have been disseminated in the last few days were taken about five years ago in Germany. He is currently 85 years old, his current health is far more fragile than he appeared in the photographs, and he has some signs of senile dementia, is not self-sufficient and requires the care of a nurse.
5. Towards the end of last year, we received a formal accusation from a person living abroad of an incident that took place in Germany in 2004. We received the claimant and carried out the due investigations according to the regulations of the German Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious Orders. All of the information was sent to the federal district attorney's office, in keeping with the regulations for formal procedures in Germany. We also sent all of this information to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, which is still examining the information.
6. We condemn all acts of abuse, we lament the suffering of the victims and we fully support the civil justice system and the ecclesial courts in clarifying the facts so that the truth can be known and justice done. We are available to collaborate wherever necessary, both with the civil and the church authorities.

7. We believe that the path to conversion that Pope Francis invites us to follow by means of gestures, concrete actions, and transparency is the only way to correct the damage caused and to draw close to those who have suffered deeply. We sincerely ask the victims and all those that we let down by the way we proceeded for forgiveness. We reaffirm our commitment to accompany those who have suffered and to clarify all of the incidents that took place.
8. This year, we established an external abuse prevention commission in Chile consisting of qualified lay people to support the creation of healthy and secure environments and the investigation and knowledge of accusations. This initiative seeks to be part of a global and collaborative vision to prevent situations as painful those we have mentioned. For any query, the email contact is: delegadopreenciondeabusos@padresdeschoenstatt.org

Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio
General Superior of the Schoenstatt Fathers

Schoenstatt, 5 October 2018