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The “Vademecum on certain points of procedure in the treatment of cases of sexual abuse of minors committed by clerics” is published today. The aim is to provide an “instruction manual” for correct conduct in cases involving deacons, priests and bishops accused of child abuse. The document is addressed to bishops, ordinaries, and superiors of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, as well as legal practitioners who help them in dealing with cases.

The need to develop such an instrument emerged during the meeting on “The Protection of Minors in the Church” held in the Vatican between 21 and 24 February 2019. Pope Francis himself, at the end of the meeting, stressed “the need for the unity of the Bishops in the application of parameters that have the value of norms and not only of guidelines”.

The document, which remains open to future updates, also on the basis of current legislation, is now available in Italian, French, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish. The German version will follow shortly.