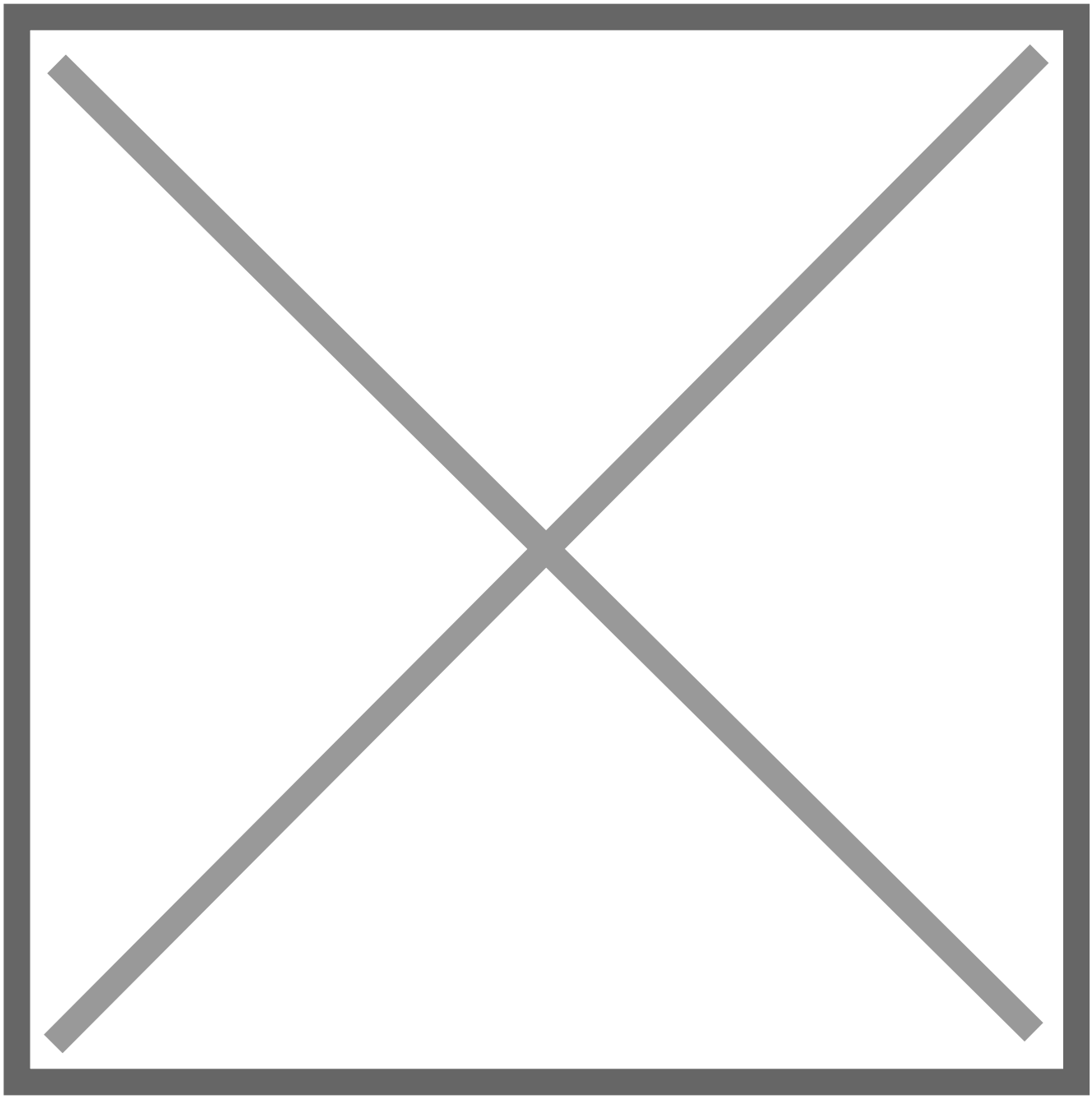
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Pope Leo XIV meets with French Archbishop Thibault Verny of Chambéry, France, president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, left, and Colombian Bishop Luis Manuel Alí Herrera, commission secretary, right, in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Sept. 12, 2025. In documents published June 13, 2026, Leo approved new statutes for the commission (PCPM) that seek to balance its integration with the Roman Curia while preserving its

independence.(CNS/Vatican Media)

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Pope Leo XIV approved new statutes for the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors that seek to balance its integration with the Roman Curia while preserving its independence.

The updated statutes, which were published by the Vatican June 13, detail the commission's role within the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, which was mandated by Pope Francis' 2022 apostolic constitution on the reform of the Roman Curia, Praedicate Evangelium ("Preach the Gospel").

However, while departments within a dicastery report to the pope via their respective prefects, the statutes state that "in matters within its competence, the commission reports directly to the Holy Father."

According to the Vatican, the pope approved the statutes May 20 during an audience with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, and adopted "ad experimentum," or on a trial basis, for a period of three years.

In a statement published by the commission, Archbishop Thibault Verny of Chambéry, the commission's president, said the new statutes marked "an important

step in deepening our shared responsibility to protect and care for the most vulnerable."

"They reflect listening to victims and survivors, to safeguarding experts, and to the experience of local Churches, and reaffirm that safeguarding remains a central priority," he said.

The commission, or PCPM, noted that the statutes, which replace those published in 2015, offer a "clearer mandate" that clarifies its role as "one of guidance rather than governance."

Among the responsibilities formalized in the statutes is the PCPM's role in ensuring the establishment of "stable and easily accessible systems for reporting abuse" in dioceses and eparchies worldwide.

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Those systems include listening and support centers and offer spiritual, therapeutic, and psychological assistance.

The statutes note that in the event of repeated failures by dioceses to establish such systems, the commission can "submit assessments and recommendations" to the relevant dicasteries "so that they can exercise their responsibilities."

The document also reiterates the commission's responsibility in preparing its annual report, which assesses safeguarding procedures and protocols implemented by Vatican dicasteries and local churches. The report is then submitted to the pope for approval before publication.

"The commission may also submit recommendations to Dicastery Prefects, in coordination with the Secretariat of State, and, in cases of repeated violations or serious shortcomings in local safeguarding systems, may submit assessments directly to the competent dicastery," the PCPM said.

The new statutes mark a milestone for the commission, which has faced criticism from former members and survivors over its lack of enforcement power.

In a video message posted after the publication of the statutes, Verny said the commission knows that "trust cannot be rebuilt by words alone" but requires

"consistent action, humility and accountability."

"These statutes are one step in an ongoing journey. Our commitment remains clear: to help ensure that the Church is a safe place for all," the French archbishop said.