



9th August, 2011

- 1. Mgr Scicluna said the Church's investigation was "never-ending", "ridiculous" and needed his prod to get things going. He said Judge Victor Caruana Colombo accepted the blame for these delays and it was clear that he did not fully understand that his role was to see whether there were ground to proceed on abuse claims – not whether the priests were innocent or guilty. What has the Church done to make the system more adequate following this scandal? Who is going to head the response team from now on? How will it work?**

Archbishop Paul Cremona more than once expressed his sorrow that this case has taken so long and more than once he personally intervened so that the case would come to an end. It is true that Mr Judge Victor Caruana Colombo conducts a very thorough investigation of every case. This necessarily takes more time but it is also fair to say the Mr Judge Caruana Colombo's investigations have more than once in the past been appreciated and praised by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and by Msgr Charles Scicluna himself. His meticulous work made the work of the Canonical Process, authorised by the same Congregation, easier and also shorter. A very important point needs to be emphasised: that the religious involved were suspended from their ministry and moved from the Home from the very first day when the report was made. New procedures have been formulated and have been sent to the Vatican for approval.

- 2. Mgr Scicluna said the psychological problems of Charles Pulis should have been noticed at an earlier stage and he should have been prevented from working with children. Does the Church agree that such mental problems should prevent priests from working with children? What will the Church do to vet priests in a more appropriate way?**

Things have changed a lot. For almost thirty years now all candidates to the priesthood have been screened by a clinical psychologist before entering the Seminary, and for the past fifteen years, are again screened by a psychiatrist after their fourth year of formation. However, one must say that while the Church is doing its utmost, there exists no screening that is fullproof.

- 3. Mgr Scicluna thinks the Church should be much more proactive to help the victims of abuse. He suggests compensation and a Victim Solidarity Fund. In today's paper, the Church says there is no policy on this. But will there be a policy? Will there be a discussion on compensation?**

In his interview on 'The Sunday Times', Msgr Scicluna distinguished between the compensation which is due according to the law, both civil and that of Canon Law which has to be carried personally by the person who has committed the abuse, and solidarity with the victims which is an obligation of solidarity for every christian. The Church has expressed this solidarity already in all psychological, pastoral and spiritual support mentioned in the Guidelines of 1999.

- 4. Mgr Scicluna also said that the Church should conduct a humble exercise in soul-searching following this year's handling of the divorce issue and the child abuse scandal. How does the Archbishop defend his leadership? Will the Church enter into this soul-search?**

For all christians, a humble exercise in soul-searching means above all to confront oneself with Our Lord's Teachings. It has to be even deeper when some members of the Church, especially when these are priests, and the Church's image, fail to mirror this. This is the case because the Archbishop and the Church Community has to be accountable also before society.

- 5. Mgr Scicluna says that the Archbishop's handling of this issue from now on will determine how he will be judged. What are the Archbishop's priorities to handle this issue so far? So far there was only a short statement released the day after the judgment and the Archbishop has remained silent for almost a week. Does this bode well for the future handling of this issue?**

Msgr Scicluna said in the interview: "But the way he's going to tackle it from now onwards is his responsibility". The Archdiocese of Malta, under the leadership of Archbishop Cremona is committed to promote the best standards to ensure a safe environment for children and young people.