



PONTIFICIA  
UNIVERSITÀ  
GREGORIANA

Istituto di Antropologia

# A culture of safeguarding in our (often small) communities

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IADC

# Jesus Christ, creator of safe and sacred space



# Foundational questions



- Who are we – Church leaders, parish leaders, members – called to be? – **spirituality**
- What do we want to be, and how do we want to act? – **(inter-)culturality**
- How do we deal with our failures, crimes, limitations etc. and the need for an ongoing learning process? – **transparency**
- What does the God of history and Lord of His Church want to tell us? – **responsibility, accountability**

**Safeguarding =**



**Safe space**

**Safe relationships**

**Safe Practices / Processes**

*... what gives life and allows for growth!*

# Situation and reactions in the Church worldwide

- The topic is present everywhere.
- Uncomfortableness, lack of knowledge, lack of willingness to engage.
- Safeguarding measures  vs dealing with the past 
- Safeguarding fatigue, “ticking off”.
- Cultural, legal, historical factors –  
No “*one size fits all*”.

# Public attention:



**From** abuse of children  
**to** abuse of (adult) persons in  
situations of vulnerability:  
women; indigenous; people with  
disability; LGBTQ+; elderly;  
(im)migrants; women religious;  
seminarians; (sexual) abuse  
*committed by women*

# Public attention:



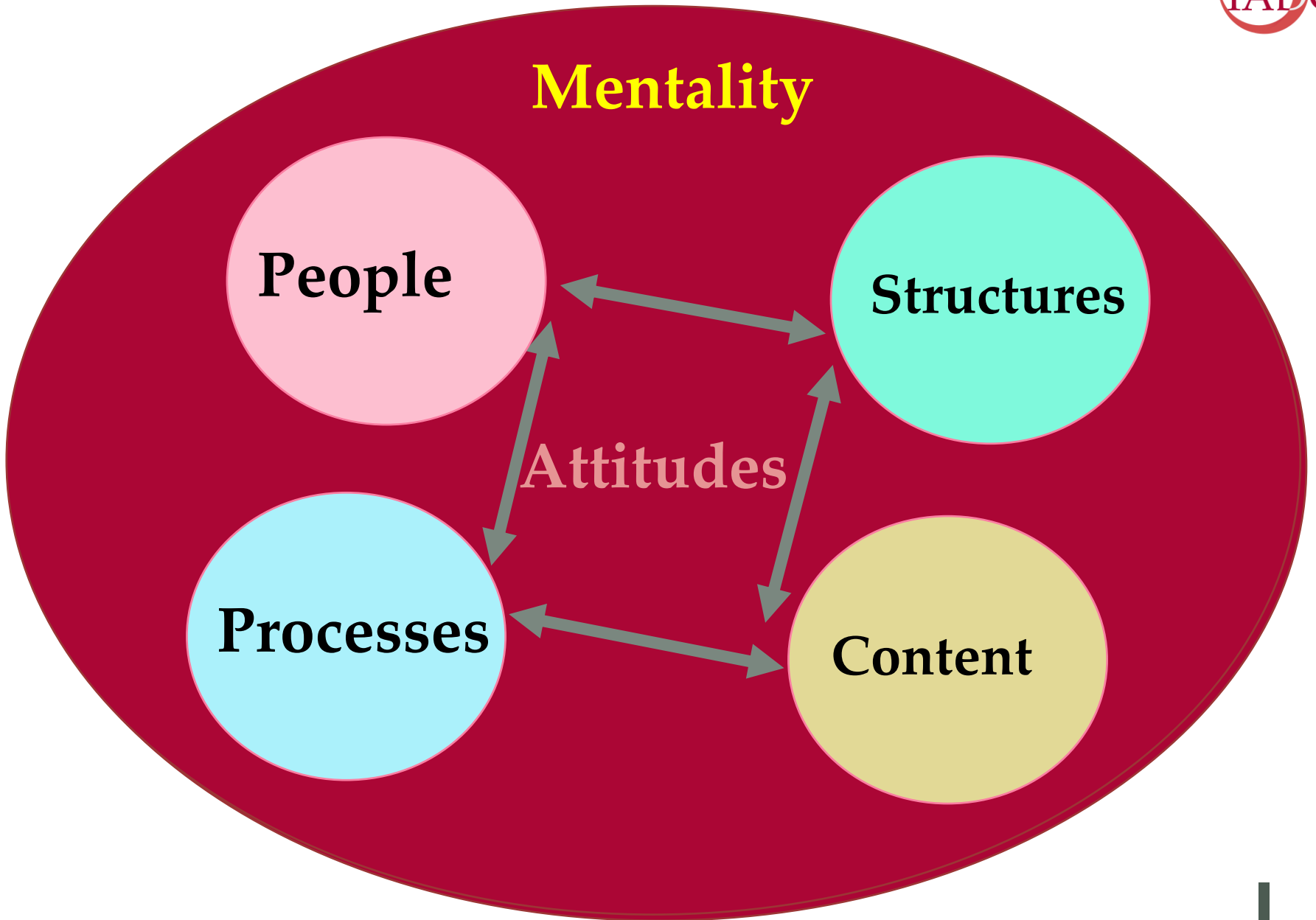
**From** sexual abuse  
**to** sexual, physical, psychological,  
emotional, verbal, neglect

**Spiritual abuse**

**Online abuse**

**Abuse of power**

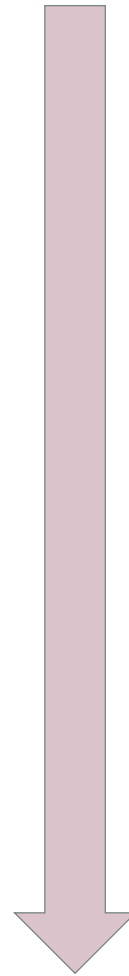
# Within a system...



# Guidelines, policies, practices



- **Guidelines** = general rules, principles, procedures, consequences
- **Policies** = contents of guidelines adapted to a specific institution/reality and its audience
- **Practices** = lived policies: the customary, habitual, or expected procedure or way of doing of something
  - → forming **Attitudes**
  - → changing **Mentality**



**theory**

**lived  
practice**

# For a Change in Mentality

- „*It will go away.*“  $\leftrightarrow$  **No, it won't facing reality**
- „*I cannot do anything.*“  $\leftrightarrow$  **Yes, you can! empowerment**
- „*Safeguarding as isolated specialisation*“  $\leftrightarrow$  Safeguarding as **integral part of mission:** pastoral, educational, spiritual, social, **community commitment**
- *Then, and only then:*  
**Culturally adapted, effective Safeguarding.**

# **Spiritual aspects**

- **Self-image as Church/ communities: Unity? Conversion?**
- **Fear of vulnerability, of compassion, of admitting to crimes and sins: remorse – confession – penance/reparation**
- **Shifting responsibility vs. accountability**
- **Institutional and personal consequences**
- **Fear of scandal – lack of courage**
- **Sexuality: tremendum et fascinans – violence – sin – shame**

# Community aspects



- **Attitudes as a further development of the cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance**
- **Safeguarding as integral part of every aspect of religious life and mission**
- **Safeguarding as catalyst for renewal of religious life, humility, service, creativity**

# Community aspects



- Dealing with (spiritual) power?
- Poverty and safeguarding?
- Chastity and safeguarding?
- Obedience and safeguarding?
- Community life: space, relationships, procedures ...?
- Personal life: way of life, ongoing learning and integration

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# The Institute of Anthropology



Part of the Gregorian University from its beginnings, the IADC was founded in 2012 as the *Centre for Child Protection* with the aim of promoting education and formation for the prevention of sexual abuse of minors.

In 2021 it became the **Institute of Anthropology. Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care (IADC)**. Expanding its scope on vulnerable persons of all ages.

The IADC pursues its mission through:

- **Research & Conferences**– collaborating with **international** institutions and experts to promote academic discourse around the world
- **Academic programmes** – one-semester Diploma, 2 year Licentiate, Doctorates
- **Blended E-Learning Programme** – spread throughout institutions worldwide.

[iadc.unigre.it](http://iadc.unigre.it)

The IADC researches and teaches the issues of dignity and care basing its approach on an anthropological view of human life from a Christian perspective. Through education, the Institute is committed to promoting contexts where all humans can live in freedom and without fear from violation of their dignity, and receive the care they need and deserve.

TO WHAT END?

The IADC follows the following guiding principles:

- Victims first
- Christian view of the human person
  - Spirituality
- Cultural sensitivity
  - Multidisciplinary.

WHO?

HOW?



Information: [iadc-network@unigre.it](mailto:iadc-network@unigre.it)

Diploma in English/ Spanish (1 Semester)

<https://iadc.unigre.it/academics/diploma-in-safeguarding.html/>

Licentiate in Safeguarding (4 Sem.; ecclesiastical degree)

<https://iadc.unigre.it/academics/licentiate-in-safeguarding.html>

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<https://iadc.unigre.it/blended-learning/>

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