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OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 190222c

Friday 22.02.2019

Meeting on “The Protection of Minors in the Church” – Intervention by the Holy Father Francis after hearing the report by Dr. Ghisoni, under-secretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

This afternoon, during the afternoon session of the Meeting on “The protection of minors in the Church”, the Holy Father Francis spoke in the full session after hearing the report by Dr. Linda Ghisoni, under-secretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, and her answer to one of the questions from the Assembly.

The following are the Pope’s extemporaneous remarks:

Words of the Holy Father

As I listened to Dr. Ghisoni, I heard the Church speak of herself. That is, we have all spoken about the Church. In all the interventions. But this time it was the Church herself who spoke. It is not merely a question of style: the feminine genius that is reflected in the Church is a woman.

To invite a woman to speak does not mean entering into the way of an ecclesiastical feminism, because in the end every feminism ends up being *machismo* with a skirt. No. Inviting a woman to speak on the wounds of the Church is inviting the Church to speak about herself, about the wounds she bears. And this, I think, is the step that we should be taking, very decisively: the woman is the image of the Church who is a woman, a bride, a mother. A style. Without this style we will speak of the people of God but like an organization, like a trades union, but not like a family borne by the mother Church.

The logic of Dr. Ghisoni’s thought was precisely that of a mother, and it ended with an account of what happens when a woman gives birth to a child. It is the feminine mystery of the Church who is bride and mother. It is not about giving more functions to the woman in the Church – yes, this is good, but in this way the problem is not solved – it is about integrating the woman as a figure of the Church in our thought. And also to think of the Church with the categories of a woman. Thank you for your witness.

