

**SEX ABUSE**

## Rupnik scandal, it's time to shed light on De Donatis' role

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There has been no official judgement by the Church on the acts committed by Don Marko Ivan Rupnik and, on closer inspection, no trial has even been opened. According to what the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Victor M.

Fernández, told *Alfa y Omega*, there are more than a few difficulties in finding the right people to set up an independent tribunal that will finally start the process.

**But one cannot even declare neutrality on this issue** and pretend that there are not numerous and detailed testimonies of real spiritual and sexual abuse committed by the ex-Jesuit, justified by a delusional theology and with concordant methods of seduction, which portray a decidedly dangerous personality. In the face of these testimonies, some of which are now public thanks to the courage of consecrated women such as Gloria Branciani, there are still those who staunchly defend the ex-Jesuit's innocence. For decades, Rupnik has been the undisputed master of hundreds of priests and lay people who hang on his every word, waiting for pronouncements that seem almost like a new revelation, judgements that seem to come from the highest mansions in heaven and are received as such. The clergy in Rome suffered most from this influence, as Cardinal Angelo De Donatis entrusted Rupnik with sermons, retreats, exercises and meditations with obsessive frequency.

**Rupnik then managed to place many of his followers in positions of authority** in the Church, weaving a vast network that explains how he and his followers were able to find bishops who agreed to incardinate them *ad experimentum* in their dioceses, without the obligation to reside there: Rupnik in Koper, welcomed by Monsignor Jurij Bizjak, whose hesitations were overcome by the insistence of the Apostolic Nuncio in Slovenia, Monsignor Jean-Antoine Speich, a friend of Rupnik and of the Aletti Centre and the first episcopal consecrator of Pope Francis' pontificate; Milan Žust and Andrej Brozovič found formal asylum at the court of Monsignor Maksimilijan Matjaž, Bishop of the Diocese of Celje, ordained by the Nuncio himself; Ivan Bresciani was given shelter in the diocese of Ascoli Piceno, where, after the 'beheading' of Monsimilijan Matjaž, bishop of the diocese of Celje, consecrated by the Nuncio himself; Ivan Bresciani was given shelter in the diocese of Ascoli Piceno, where, after the 'beheading' of Mons. D'Ercole, he was appointed Mons. Gianpiero Palmieri. Palmieri, like De Donatis from Apulia, came from the clergy of Rome; in 2018 he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Rome and consecrated by his compatriot. The former Jesuits of the Aletti Centre have thus found refuge with Rupnik's friends and protectors, with complete freedom of movement and residence, without anyone batting an eyelid.

**De Donatis, as we documented in our report,** continues to be the great protector not only of the Slovenian priest, but also of the reestablishment of a new unofficial community that has been living for some time in the convent of Montefiolo, owned by the Benedictine Sisters of Priscilla, a stone's throw from the residence of Gloria

Branciani. To underline the Cardinal's total insensitivity to the burden that Rupnik's victims have carried and continue to carry.

**A source explains to us that the Cardinal of Salento** had himself appointed by the Holy See as the nuns' papal delegate, an appointment that gives him full papal powers in the management of the community, including finances and properties, which means that the sisters can no longer dispose of their assets. The purpose of the delegation is to help those Institutes which, for reasons of numbers and age, are no longer able to govern themselves; but we all know that everyone has his own way of helping others. And De Donatis has seen fit to extend his benevolence by offering hospitality to the small group of ex-Jesuits who have decided to follow Rupnik usquead mortem. The presence of a Cardinal Commissioner not only trapped the nuns, but also cut off the Bishop of Sabina-Poggio Mirteto, who could do nothing but take note of the new situation, despite - we are told - his disappointment at the departure of the nuns.

**The fact that De Donatis used his position to continue to protect Rupnik** and the new community, knowing full well the serious accusations against the former Jesuit, should immediately alert the Holy See, which, in the name of justice and truth, should not delay in summoning the nuns' superior to verify that De Donatis' management is not damaging the community, and to investigate the cardinal's entire work in his capacity as commissioner. Particularly because there are strong suspicions that, to the detriment of the Benedictine nuns of Priscilla, the new home for the community that lived in the Aletti centre in Rome is being prepared in Montefiolo, since the building in Via Paolina belongs to the Society of Jesus, which will probably want to use it again.