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L'Osservatore Romano editor defends church, pope

John L. Allen Jr. | Apr. 12, 2010 NCR Today

Rome -- On the same day the Vatican published a "layman's guide" to procedures when a priest is accused of sexual abuse -- which, for the first time in a Vatican document, explicitly includes a directive to comply with civil laws requiring bishops to report abuse to the police -- the editor of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, dropped by Rome's Foreign Press Club to talk about the crisis that has engulfed Pope Benedict XVI in recent weeks.

Gian Maria Vian, a lay professor of history tapped to take over *L'Osservatore Romano* in October 2007, offered a robust defense of both the church and the pope. Vian generally kept his cool, though at one point he became testy in complaining that the media reads the crisis into everything said or done at the Vatican these days ? a reflection, perhaps, of the intense pressure of the last few weeks.

Vian conceded that there were "great failures in governance" that made the crisis possible, but also insisted that the church now has an "exemplary" approach to the problem of sexual abuse of children, and blamed what he called a "media campaign" for tarnishing the pope's image.

"Honestly, the Holy See is doing everything possible to resolve this horrible scandal," Vian said.

Read the full report here: Editor of Vatican paper comes out swinging on the crisis [1]

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