

Italy Group Asks Prosecutors to Question US Cardinal Over Abuse

An Italian consumer group on Monday urged Rome prosecutors to question U.S. **Cardinal Roger Mahony**, who is in the city to attend the **conclave** to elect a successor to Pope Benedict, over a sexual abuse cover-up scandal in the United States.

The **Codacons** group said it had asked **Rome** prosecutors several days ago to investigate **sexual abuse** Mahony is accused of covering up in the 1980s, and to try to establish whether minors or Italian citizens were among the victims.

“Considering the cardinal is present in the capital, we believe magistrates must summon him before the start of the conclave, or in any case before he returns to the United States, in order to gain useful insight,” the group said in a statement.

As archbishop of Los Angeles from 1985, Mahony worked to send priests known to be abusers out of the state to shield them from law enforcement scrutiny, according to church files unsealed under a U.S. court order in January.

His successor, Archbishop Jose Gomez, has removed him from all public and administrative duties, but Mahony has made clear his intention to be among 117 cardinals allowed into the **Vatican’s** Sistine Chapel to choose the new leader of the world’s 1.2 billion Catholics.

American and Italian Catholic activists in February petitioned Mahony to exclude himself from the conclave, saying he would taint the new pontiff with the same scandal that dogged Benedict.

An Italian abuse victims group is separately petitioning the Vatican to exclude Cardinal Domenico Calcagno from the

conclave, saying the former bishop of Savona failed to report an abusive priest in his diocese to civil authorities.

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