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A view of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, March 11, 2020. Pope Francis took the unusual decision Wednesday (Sept. 25) to expel 10 people from the troubled Catholic movement in Peru known as Sodalitium Christianae Vitae. (AP/Andrew Medichini, File)

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Vatican City — September 25, 2024

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Pope Francis took the unusual decision Thursday to expel 10 people – a bishop, priests and laypeople – from a troubled Catholic movement in Peru after a Vatican investigation uncovered “sadistic” abuses of power, authority and spirituality.

The move against the leadership of the Sodalitium Christianae Vitae, or Sodalitium of Christian Life, followed Francis’ decision last month to expel the group’s founder, Luis Figari, after he was found to have sodomized his recruits.

The decision was announced by the Peruvian Bishops Conference, which posted a statement from the Vatican embassy on its website.

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The statement was astonishing because it listed the abuses uncovered by the Vatican investigation and the people responsible: It reported physical abuses “including with sadism and violence,” sect-like abuses of conscience, spiritual abuse, abuses of authority, economic abuses in administering church money and the “abuse in the exercise of the apostolate of journalism.”

The later was presumably aimed at a Sodalitium-linked journalist who has attacked critics of the movement on social media.