

VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI: TEXT AND COMMENTARY – PART II

Domy Thomas, MSFS*

Domy Thomas' article "*Vos estis lux mundi: Text and Commentary*" of the Apostolic Letter *Vos estis lux mundi*, of Pope Francis dated 7 May 2019, considers each article of the document giving it the possible strict interpretation in the numerical order of the document. Having dealt with the general provisions in the document and their commentary in the Part I (*Iustitia* Vol. 10, n. 2) this Part II of the same article, treats Title II of the document discussing the procedures to be followed by cardinals, patriarchs, bishops and legates of the Roman Pontiff in handling "delicts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue" committed by clerics or religious.

Title II: Provisions Concerning Bishops and Their Equivalents

The second title indicates the ways to act on any reports about these delicts, concerning bishops, and those who are equivalent to them in law. Church is present in five continents and her dioceses are present in different countries of these continents. While the discipline concerning priests and deacons depends on the respective diocesan bishop of the place, who has the power to investigate and sanction except for the cases reserved to the Holy See, the discipline of bishops in similar cases belongs to the Holy See always, because the members of the Episcopal College depend only on the Roman Pontiff. Because of this, the power of judging the bishops in penal cases (CIC c. 1405, CCEO c. 1060) corresponds exclusively to the Roman Pontiff. A similar thing can be said for the other persons indicated in the text. Church has established methods over the centuries to investigate and possibly

* Domy Thomas is a catholic priest of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS), Nagpur province. He holds a licentiate in Canon Law from St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore and Doctorate in Canon Law from Pontifical Lateran University, Rome. He worked mainly in the formation houses of the MSFS. At present, he is appointed as the Parish Priest of St. Francis de Sales Church, Janakpuri, New Delhi.

punish diocesan bishops, making use of the assistance of the Apostolic Nunciatures, or through the other representatives of the Roman pontiff. With this Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*, the Church tries to combine these methods, with systems that give greater proximity to the places where the delicts occurred, which allows a better knowledge and contextualization of the circumstances, and also allows her to meet any needs of justice in the communities. To this end, *Vos estis lux mundi* aims in a particular way to ensure the truthful communication of information, a first check in the vicinity of the places of the delicts and a balanced and shared management of the reports by the various authorities involved.¹

6. Subjective Scope of Application²

Article 6

The procedural norms referred to in this title concern the conduct referred to in article 1, carried out by:

- a) Cardinals, Patriarchs, Bishops and Legates of the Roman Pontiff;
- b) clerics who are, or who have been, the pastoral heads of a particular Church or of an entity assimilated to it, Latin or Oriental, including the Personal Ordinariates, for the acts committed *durante munere*;
- c) clerics who are or who have been in the past leaders of a Personal Prelature, for the acts committed *durante munere*;
- d) those who are, or who have been, Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or of Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical right, as well as of monasteries *sui iuris*, with respect to the acts committed *durante munere*.

Since the second part deals with the procedural norms, article six identifies the subjects for whom the procedures specified in title two of *Vos estis lux mundi* is to be followed. They are divided into four categories.

¹ Cf. J. I. Arrieta, "Explanatory Note: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*," accessed on 07/11/2019.

² The numbering begins with 6. This being part II of "*Vos estis lux mundi*: Text and Commentary" it follows numbering of the articles of the document.

a) Cardinals and those in the Order of Episcopate in Various Levels

Cardinals, Patriarchs, Bishops and the Legates of the Roman Pontiff is the first category.

Cardinal: "The Roman Pontiff freely selects men to be promoted as cardinals, who have been ordained at least into the order of the presbyterate and are especially outstanding in doctrine, morals, piety, and prudence in action; those who are not yet Bishops must receive episcopal consecration.³ Cardinals assist the Roman Pontiff in the daily affairs of the universal Church in various ways."⁴

Patriarch: "A Patriarch is a Bishop who enjoys power over all Bishops including Metropolitans and other Christian faithful of the Church over which he presides according to the norm of law approved by the supreme authority of the Church."⁵

Bishop: "The Supreme Pontiff freely appoints Bishops or confirms those legitimately elected."⁶ A Bishop to whom the care of a diocese is entrusted is called a diocesan Bishop; others to whom the care of a diocese is not entrusted are called titular Bishops.⁷

Legates of the Roman Pontiff: "The Roman Pontiff has the innate and independent right to appoint, send, transfer, and recall his own legates either to particular Churches in various nations or regions or to states and public authorities."⁸ "To the legates of the Roman Pontiff is entrusted the office of representing the Roman Pontiff in a stable manner to particular Churches or also to the states and public authorities to which they are sent."⁹

b) Heads of a Particular Church or Entity Assimilated to It

The second category here is the clerics all who are or who were heads (either retired or after completing the term of office) of a particular Church or an entity assimilated to it either of Latin Church or of an Oriental Church, including the Personal Ordinariates, for the delicts mentioned in article one committed while they were in that office.

³ Canon 351 §1 CIC 1983.

⁴ Canon 349 CIC 1983; Canon 46 §1 CCEO 1990.

⁵ Canon 55 CCEO 1990.

⁶ Canon 377 §1 CIC 1983.

⁷ Canon 377 §1 CIC 1983; Canons 178-179 CCEO 1990.

⁸ Canon 362 CIC 1983.

⁹ Canon 363 §1 CIC 1983.

As per the canon law: “Particular Churches, in which and from which the one and only Catholic Church exists, are first of all dioceses, to which, unless it is otherwise evident, are likened a Territorial Prelature and Territorial Abbacy, an Apostolic Vicariate and an Apostolic Prefecture, and an Apostolic Administration erected in a stable manner.”¹⁰

“A Territorial Prelature or Territorial Abbacy is a certain portion of the people of God which is defined territorially and whose care, due to special circumstances, is entrusted to some prelate or abbot who governs it as its proper pastor just like a diocesan Bishop.”¹¹

“An Apostolic Vicariate or Apostolic Prefecture is a certain portion of the people of God which has not yet been established as a diocese due to special circumstances and which, to be shepherded, is entrusted to an apostolic vicar or apostolic prefect who governs it in the name of the Supreme Pontiff.”¹²

“An Apostolic Administration is a certain portion of the people of God which is not erected as a diocese by the Supreme Pontiff due to special and particularly grave reasons and whose pastoral care is entrusted to an apostolic administrator who governs it in the name of the Supreme Pontiff.”¹³

Personal Ordinariate: Personal Ordinariate is something similar to that of personal prelate, but it has more to do with personal jurisdiction.

c) The Leaders of a Personal Prelature

The third category is the clerics who are or who were the leaders of a personal prelate, for the delicts mentioned in article 1 of this document while they were in the office. “After the conferences of Bishops involved have been heard, the Apostolic See can erect personal prelate, which consist of presbyters and deacons of the secular clergy, to promote a suitable distribution of presbyters or to accomplish particular pastoral or missionary works for various regions or for different particular social groups.”¹⁴ A prelate presides over it as proper ordinary.¹⁵

¹⁰ Canon 368 CIC 1983.

¹¹ Canon 370 CIC 1983.

¹² Canon 371 §1 CIC 1983.

¹³ Canon 371 §2 CIC 1983.

¹⁴ Canon 294 CIC 1983.

¹⁵ Canon 294 §1 CIC 1983.

d) The Supreme Moderators of Pontifical Right

The fourth category are the Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of pontifical right, as well as of the monasteries *sui iuris*, for the delicts mentioned in article one committed while they were in the office as the Supreme Moderators. The Supreme Moderator is the one who holds power over all the provinces, houses, and members of an institute and this power is exercised according to proper law of the institute.¹⁶ The Supreme Moderator is designated by canonical election according to the norm of the constitutions of the institute.¹⁷ One of the functions of the general chapter is to elect the Supreme Moderator.¹⁸ But this document does not include the Supreme Moderators of the diocesan right under this category therefore for the delicts related to them there is no need of following this procedure. But for all the the Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life of pontifical right, as well as of the monasteries *sui iuris* are included and for them the provisions given in the second title of *Vos estis lux mundi* is to be followed. They are the persons who do not have a superior authority below the Roman Pontiff.

7. Competent Dicastery

Article 7

§1. For the purposes of this title, "competent Dicastery" means the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, regarding the delicts reserved to it by the norms in force, as well as, in all other cases and as far as their respective jurisdiction is concerned, based on the proper law of the Roman Curia:

- the Congregation for the Oriental Churches;
- the Congregation for Bishops;
- the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples;
- the Congregation for the Clergy;
- the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

¹⁶ Canon 622 CIC 1983.

¹⁷ Canon 625 §1 CIC 1983.

¹⁸ Canon 631 §1 CIC 1983.

§2. In order to ensure the best coordination, the competent Dicastery informs the Secretariat of State, and the other Dicasteries directly concerned, of the report and the outcome of the investigation.

§3. The communications referred to in this title between the Metropolitan and the Holy See take place through the Pontifical Representative.

§1 Dicastery to which Report to be Forwarded

The seventh article in general tells that the cases are to be referred to the competent dicastery. And it clearly states that for the cases reserved to the CDF, the same congregation remains as competent. They are the *graviora delicta* cases mentioned in SST 2000 and its revision in 2011. With regard to this document, they are the delicts of performing a sexual act with a minor or who are equated to minor and the delicts related to child pornography mentioned in article 1 of this document by a person mentioned in article 6 of this document if he is a cleric.¹⁹ If a non-cleric commits these delicts, this document does not reserve it to the CDF but it must be forwarded to the competent dicastery. This is possible for the fourth category given in article 6. For example, if there is a case of the sexual abuse of minors concerning a Supreme Moderator of a lay Institute of Consecrated Life, that is not a case reserved to CDF.

It is the Congregation for the Oriental Churches that considers the matters that concerns or affects the Oriental Churches.²⁰ “The competence of this Congregation extends to all matters which are proper to the Oriental Churches and which are to be referred to the Apostolic See.”²¹

For the Latin Church, it is the congregation for Bishops that has the competence over all that pertains to the establishment and provision of particular Churches and to the exercise of the episcopal office, except for the matters for which the competence is given to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.²² This Congregation has competence

¹⁹ The Motu Proprio *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST) of 30 April 2001, updated on 21 May 2010, specifies the delicts reserved for the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (Articles 1-6), pursuant to the Article 52 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor bonus*.

²⁰ *Pastor bonus*, Article 56.

²¹ *Pastor bonus*, Article 58.

²² *Pastor bonus*, Article 75.

over everything involving the Holy See in the matter of personal prelature.²³

Congregation for the Evangelization of the people has the competence over mission territories and it carries out the functions that the Congregation of Bishops fulfils within the scope of its competence.²⁴ Societies of Apostolic Life that were founded for the missions are subject to this Congregation.²⁵

The Congregation for clergy is competent over the matters concerning the life, conduct, rights, and obligations of clergy.²⁶ The same congregation also deals with everything that has to do with the clerical state as such for all clergy, also of religious, but it has to consult the dicasteries involved when the matter so requires.²⁷

Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life deals with everything which, according the law, belongs to the Holy See concerning the life and work of the institutes and societies like the rights and obligations of members, dispensation from vows and the dismissal of members etc.²⁸

§2 Cooperation Among the Dicasteries

The second paragraph asks the competent dicastery to inform the Secretariat of State and the other dicasteries directly concerned of the report and the result of the investigation. This is in order to ensure the best cooperation between the dicasteries because "matters touching the competence of more than one dicastery are to be examined together by the dicasteries concerned."²⁹

§3 Role of Pontifical Representatives

The third paragraph directs that all the communication that are to take place between the Holy See and the Metropolitan referred in the title II of this document should take place through the pontifical representative of the territory. This is with regard to the reports referred in title II between the Metropolitan and the Holy See, but as per the title 1 article 3 paragraph 3, any person who has the report of a

²³ *Pastor bonus*, Article 80.

²⁴ *Pastor bonus*, Article 89.

²⁵ *Pastor bonus*, Article 89 §2.

²⁶ *Pastor bonus*, Article 95 §1.

²⁷ *Pastor bonus*, Article 96.

²⁸ *Pastor bonus*, Article 108 §1.

²⁹ *Pastor bonus*, Article 26 §1.

delict concerning the article 1 by any of the persons mentioned in article 6 is to report the matter to the Metropolitan or one who has the competence as per articles 8 and 9. But they can send the report to Holy See always either through the Pontifical Representative or directly.

8. Procedure Applicable to A Bishop of the Latin Church

Article 8

§1. The Authority that receives a report transmits it both to the Holy See and to the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province where the person reported is domiciled.

§2. If the report concerns the Metropolitan, or the Metropolitan See is vacant, it shall be forwarded to the Holy See, as well as to the senior suffragan Bishop by promotion, to whom, if such is the case, the following provisions regarding the Metropolitan apply.

§3. In the event that the report concerns a Papal Legate, it shall be transmitted directly to the Secretariat of State.

§1 Report to the Metropolitan and to the Holy See

Except in special cases and the particularities of Eastern law, reports about any of the delicts mentioned in the first article by any of the persons mentioned in article 6 of this document is to transmit the report to the Holy See as well as to the Metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province where the person reported has the domicile. A Metropolitan is an Archbishop of his diocese presiding over an ecclesiastical province. Always this office is joined with an Episcopal See determined or approved by the Roman Pontiff.³⁰ Most of the dioceses and territorial circumscriptions are part of the ecclesiastical Provinces, as suffragan dioceses of a Metropolitan See held by the Metropolitan Archbishop.³¹ This provision is in accordance with canon law because in the suffragan dioceses, a Metropolitan is competent to exercise vigilance over the careful observance of the faith and ecclesiastical discipline and if there are any abuses, he is competent to inform the Roman Pontiff.³² At the same time, it should be noted that a

³⁰ Canon 435, CIC 1983.

³¹ Cf. J. I. Arrieta, "Explanatory Note: *Motu Proprio Vos estis lux mundi*," accessed on 08/11/2019.

³² Canon 436 §1, 1° CIC 1983.

Metropolitan has no other power of governance in the suffragan dioceses in normal circumstances.³³ But there could be exceptional cases like conducting a canonical visitation with the approval of the Apostolic See if a suffragan has neglected it or designating a diocesan administrator according to the norm of canons 421, §2, and 425, §3.³⁴

§2. Report to Senior Suffragan Bishop by Promotion and to Holy See

The second paragraph clarifies that if the report is concerning a Metropolitan or in case if the Metropolitan See is vacant, the report is to be forwarded to the Holy See as well as to the senior suffragan Bishop by promotion. If the Metropolitan See is vacant the responsibilities entrusted to the Metropolitan with regard to the cases mentioned in this document rests on the senior suffragan Bishop by promotion. This too is in accordance with the norms of canons law. Because for the cases of the negligence of a Metropolitan or when the Metropolitan See is vacant, the responsibility that are to be observed by him is entrusted to the senior suffragan Bishop by promotion in many cases.³⁵

§3 Report Directly to the Secretariat of the State

The third paragraph is about the procedure applicable for the event of a report concerning a papal legate. Such reports are to be transmitted directly to the Secretariat of the State by the authority that received the report. Because as per *pastor bonus*, the second section of the Secretariat of the State deal with what pertains to the papal legates within the scope of its competence.³⁶

9. Procedure Applicable to Bishops of Eastern Catholic Churches

Article 9

§1. Reports concerning a Bishop of a Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal or Metropolitan Church *sui iuris* shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan of the Church *sui iuris*.

§2. If the report concerns a Metropolitan of a Patriarchal or Major Archiepiscopal Church, who exercises his office within the

³³ Canon 436 §1 CIC 1983.

³⁴ Canon 436 §1, 2-3° CIC 1983.

³⁵ Canons 395 §4; 415; 421 §2; 425 §3; 500 §3 CIC 1983.

³⁶ *Pastor bonus* 46, 3°.

territory of these Churches, it is forwarded to the respective Patriarch or Major Archbishop.

§3. In the preceding cases, the Authority who receives the report shall also forward it to the Holy See.

§4. If the person reported is a Bishop or a Metropolitan outside the territory of the Patriarchal, the Major Archiepiscopal or the Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*, the report shall be forwarded to the Holy See.

§5. In the event that the report concerns a Patriarch, a Major Archbishop, a Metropolitan of a Church *sui iuris* or a Bishop of the other Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*, it shall be forwarded to the Holy See.

§ 6. The following provisions relating to the Metropolitan apply to the ecclesiastical Authority to which the report is to be forwarded based on this article.

§1. Reports concerning a Bishop of a Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal or Metropolitan Church sui iuris

Article 9 gives the procedure applicable for the cases of the Bishops of the Eastern or Oriental Catholic Churches. As it is seen earlier there are four categories of Oriental Churches. They are Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal, Metropolitan and other Church *sui iuris*. For the cases of the Bishops of the first three categories, that is for the cases of the Bishops of Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal or Metropolitan Church *sui iuris* the report of these delicts should be submitted to the respective Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan of the Church *sui iuris*. As per the third paragraph, the authority who received the report is to forward it to the Holy See.

§2. Reports concerning a Metropolitan of a Patriarchal or Major Archiepiscopal Church

The second paragraph says if the report concerns the Metropolitan of the first two categories, that is of Patriarchal Church or Major Archiepiscopal Church, the report is to be forwarded to the respective Patriarch or Major Archbishop provided the accused exercises his office within the territory of these Churches.

§3. Forwarding to the Holy See

As per the third paragraph the authority who received the report is to forward it to the Holy See. That is for the cases of preceding two paragraphs, the Patriarch or the Major Archbishop or the Metropolitan

who received the report is to forward the report to the Holy See. They are to forward the acts to the Holy See because only the Holy See has the competence to judge them.³⁷

§4. For the Cases Outside the Territory

As per the fourth paragraph, if the person accused is a Bishop or a Metropolitan who exercises the office outside the territory of the Church *sui iuris* of any category, the report is to be forwarded to the Holy See by the authority that received the report. Because usually the heads of the Church *sui iuris* have power only within the territorial boundaries.³⁸

§5. For cases of the Head of an Oriental Catholic Church

The fifth paragraph speaks accusation about the heads of the four categories of the Oriental Catholic Churches. It could be either the Patriarch of a Patriarchal Church, Major Archbishop of a Major Archiepiscopal Church, or a Metropolitan of the Metropolitan Church *sui iuris* or a Bishop of other Eastern Catholic Church *sui iuris*, for all such cases the authority who receives the report about these persons should forward the report to the Holy See. They are either Bishops or Hierarchs dependent immediately on the Holy See³⁹ so they do not have superior authority below the Roman Pontiff.

§6. Metropolitan: The Authority to Which the Report is Sent

Sixth paragraph is about the following articles. It states the following provisions given in the articles about the Metropolitan apply to the ecclesiastical authority to which the report is to be forwarded in cases where it is not the Metropolitan who is competent to forward the reports.

10. Initial Duties of the Metropolitan

Article 10.

§1. Unless the report is manifestly unfounded, the Metropolitan immediately requests, from the competent Dicastery, that he be assigned to commence the investigation. If the Metropolitan considers the report manifestly unfounded, he shall so inform the Pontifical Representative.

³⁷ Canons 1060-1061 CCEO 1990.

³⁸ Canons 78 §2; 152 CCEO 1990.

³⁹ Canon 175 CCEO 1990.

§2. The Dicastery shall proceed without delay, and in any case within thirty days from the receipt of the first report by the Pontifical Representative or the request for the assignment by the Metropolitan, providing the appropriate instructions on how to proceed in the specific case.

§1. Requesting the Mandate

The last paragraph of the previous article is clear that whatever is mentioned about the Metropolitan is applicable to the competent authority to whom the report is to be forwarded. As soon as he receives the report, the first provision to which the Metropolitan is bound is to request immediately from the competent dicastery, that he is assigned or given the mandate to initiate an investigation. Because except for the instances specified in canon law, a Metropolitan does not have power of governance over suffragan dioceses.⁴⁰ This is example where the Metropolitan requires a mandate. If a case is manifestly unfounded or baseless, he may not ask the competent dicastery for competence to start the investigation, but he should inform his opinion to the Pontifical Representative. The communications are made through the Pontifical Representative who thus becomes a second channel of information and close connection of the Metropolitan.⁴¹

§2. Mandate and Appropriate Instructions

The second paragraph tells that the dicastery is to make arrangements without delay at least within thirty days after the receipt of the first notification form the papal representative or the request for the assignment by the Metropolitan, by giving appropriate instructions with regard to the specific course of action for the particular cases. This instruction can include even the time within which the investigation must be concluded.⁴² Once the dicastery receives the report, it has to take a decision within thirty days and it has the right to decide the course of action.

⁴⁰ Canon 436 §3 CIC 1983.

⁴¹ Cf. J. I. Arrieta, "Explanatory Note: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*," accessed on 08/11/2019.

⁴² *Vos estis lux mundi*, Articles 12 §4; 14 §1.

11. Entrusting the Investigation to a Person Other than the Metropolitan

Article 11.

§1. If the competent Dicastery considers it appropriate to entrust the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan, the Metropolitan is so informed. The Metropolitan delivers all relevant information and documents to the person appointed by the Dicastery.

§2. In the case referred to in the previous paragraph, the following provisions relating to the Metropolitan apply to the person charged with conducting the investigation.

§1. Mandate to Another Person

The competent dicastery is not bound always to appoint the Metropolitan to conduct the investigation. Depending on the case and situation, the competent dicastery is free to entrust the investigation to another person. If the dicastery considers to entrust the investigation to another person other than Metropolitan, the matter is to be informed to the Metropolitan. If that is the case, the Metropolitan should hand over all relevant information and documents to the person to whom the dicastery entrusts responsibility of investigation.

§2. Term Metropolitan: the Person who Conducts the Investigation

If a person other than the Metropolitan is entrusted with the investigation, the provision that follows concerning the Metropolitan is to be applied to the person appointed by the dicastery to carry out the investigation. From article twelve onwards the Metropolitan could be the Metropolitan or a senior suffragan Bishop who is entrusted with the investigation as per the article eight or any of the competent authority of the *sui iuris* Church mentioned in article nine, if they are given the assignment to investigate by the competent dicastery. It could be also any other person to whom the investigation is entrusted as per the article eleven.

12. Carrying Out the Investigation

Article 12.

§1. Once he has been appointed by the competent Dicastery and acting in compliance with the instructions received, the Metropolitan, either personally or through one or more suitable persons:

- a) collects relevant information regarding the facts;
- b) accesses the information and documents necessary for the purpose of the investigation kept in the archives of ecclesiastical offices;
- c) obtains the cooperation of other Ordinaries or Hierarchs whenever necessary;
- d) requests information from individuals and institutions, including civil institutions, that are able to provide useful elements for the investigation.

§2. If it is necessary to hear from a minor or a vulnerable person, the Metropolitan shall adopt appropriate procedures, which take into account their status.

§3. In the event that there are well-founded motives to conclude that information or documents concerning the investigation are at risk of being removed or destroyed, the Metropolitan shall take the necessary measures for their preservation.

§4. Even when making use of other persons, the Metropolitan nevertheless remains responsible for the direction and conduct of the investigation, as well as for the timely execution of the instructions referred to in article 10 §2.

§5. The Metropolitan shall be assisted by a notary freely appointed pursuant to canons 483 §2 CIC and 253 §2 CCEO.

§6. The Metropolitan is required to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. If he considers himself to be in a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to guarantee the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to recuse himself and report the circumstance to the competent Dicastery.

§7. The person under investigation enjoys the presumption of innocence.

§8. The Metropolitan, if requested by the competent Dicastery, informs the person of the investigation concerning him/her, hears his/her account of the facts and invites him/her to present a brief in defence. In such cases, the investigated person may be assisted by legal counsel.

§9. Every thirty days, the Metropolitan sends a status report on the state of the investigation to the competent Dicastery.

§1. The Responsibilities of the Investigator (Metropolitan)

Once appointed by the dicastery, the Metropolitan or the other person appointed is responsible for conducting the investigation. He has to do the investigation in compliance with the instructions given by the dicastery. He is free to conduct the investigation either personally or through one or more suitable persons. He has to do it by fulfilling the following.

a) he should collect all the relevant information regarding the facts.

b) he should also check the information and documents necessary for the investigation, which are kept in the archives of ecclesiastical offices.

c) he should obtain the collaboration of other ordinaries or hierarchs where and when it is necessary.

d) he should also request information from individual persons and institution including the civil institutions, who are able to provide useful information or elements for the investigation.

§2. Procedure to hear a Minor

For the investigation, if the Metropolitan finds it necessary to hear a minor or a vulnerable person, he should adopt appropriate modalities for it taking into account the status of the person concerned. Most of the countries already have a guideline given by the Episcopal Conference, after they were instructed to do so by the CDF in 2011.⁴³ They need to follow them in dealing with such cases.

§3. Protecting the Documents

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the information or documents concerning the investigation could be removed/suppressed or destroyed, the Metropolitan should take the necessary measures to safeguard it.

§4. Personal Responsibility of the Metropolitan

The paragraph one already gave the freedom for the Metropolitan to investigate the matter either personally or through one or more

⁴³ CDF, Circular Letter to assist Episcopal Conferences in Developing Guidelines for Dealing with Cases of Sexual Abuses of Minors Perpetrated by Clerics, 3 May 2011, in http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20110503_abuso-minori_en.html, accessed on 18-08-2019.

persons. But even if he makes use of the other persons, the Metropolitan remains responsible for conducting the investigation as well as for the timely execution of the instructions referred in article 10 §2. The dicastery gives appropriate instructions on how to proceed in specific cases. Such instructions are to be carefully followed and the Metropolitan or the person who is entrusted with the investigation by the dicastery is responsible for the execution of such instructions.

§5. Need of a Notary

The Metropolitan is to be assisted by a notary freely appointed in accordance with the canons 483 §2 of CIC 1983 and 253 §2 CCEO 1990. According to these canons, a notary must be a person of good character and above all reproach in other words, should be of unimpaired reputation and above all suspicions. For the cases in which the reputation of a priest is in question, the notary should be a priest.⁴⁴ And it is the duty of the notary who is appointed for the particular case 1) to draw up the acts and documents regarding decrees, dispositions, obligations, or other tacks that are required of them; 2) to record faithfully in writing the things that are done and to sign it with a notation of the place, day, month, and year; 3) having observed what is required, to furnish acts or documents and to declare copies of them to be in conformity with the original.⁴⁵

§6. Need of Impartiality from Metropolitan

The sixth paragraph of this article is very important. Because it includes the duty of the Metropolitan to self-report to the Dicastery if, for various reasons, there are any risks of impartiality on his part or conflicts of interest that could threaten the integrity of the investigation.⁴⁶ The Metropolitan is to act impartially and without conflicts of interest. For ensuring the justice impartiality is necessary and there should not be any conflict of interest and if the person doing the investigation is unable to do so, justice may be denied, therefore, he is required to abstain and self-report the matter to the competent dicastery.

§7. Presumption of Innocence

Presumption of innocence is in favour of the person who is under investigation. Presumption is defined “a probable conjecture about an

⁴⁴ Canons 483 §2 of CIC 1983; 253 §2 CCEO 1990.

⁴⁵ Canons 484 CIC 1983; 254 CCEO 1990.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. I. Arrieta, “Explanatory Note: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*,” accessed on 08/11/2019.

uncertain matter; a presumption of law is one which the law itself establishes; a human presumption is one which a judge formulates"⁴⁷ As per both the Codes "a person who has a favourable legal presumption is freed from the burden of proof which then devolves upon the other party"⁴⁸ Since the accused person enjoys the presumption of innocence, it is the duty of the investigator to find the truth procuring all the necessary proofs and evidences and to prove the reality.

§8. Right of Defence of the Accused

If requested by the dicastery, the Metropolitan is to inform the person under investigation about the investigation. He should also hear the account of the fact and invite the person under investigation to present a brief defence. Here the person under the investigation is free to get the assistance of a legal procurator. Even when the delict and the immutability are clearly evident, the possibility to defend himself must be given to the accused cleric in every case. The right of defence in any juridical system is one of the pivots of the penal trial, and this is also true in the juridical system of the Church, whether it proceeds along the judicial route or when it adopts the extrajudicial route. Nobody can be condemned or penalised without the possibility of defending himself.⁴⁹ The canonical process is null, if "the right of defence was denied to one or other party."⁵⁰ The Metropolitan or the person duly designated by him brings to the attention of the accused the delict, that is attributed to him, as well as, the proofs assembled. Another important right of the accused is the right to a canonical counsel. The right to canonical counsel is constitutive of the right to self-defence.⁵¹

§9. Status Report Every Thirty Days

The Metropolitan is to send every thirty days a report to the competent dicastery about the state of the investigations. Therefore, the dicastery

⁴⁷ Canon 1584 CIC 1983.

⁴⁸ Canons 1585 CIC 1983; 1266 CCEO 1990.

⁴⁹ Cf. C. Gullo, "Reasons for Legal Protection in Penal Environment," in P. M. Dugan (ed.), *The Penal Process and Protection of Rights in Canon Law*, Montreal, 2005, 140.

⁵⁰ Canon 1620, 2° CIC 1983.

⁵¹ Cf. F. Daneels, "The Right of Defence," in *Studia canonica*, 27 (1993), 77-95; J. P. Beal, "Administrative Leave: Canon 1722 Revisited," in *Studia canonica*, 27 (1993), 319-320.

is aware of the progress of the case and also can make sure that the case is really progressing.

13. Involvement of Qualified Persons

Article 13

§1. In accordance with any eventual directives of the Episcopal Conference, of the Synod of Bishops or of the Council of Hierarchs regarding how to assist the Metropolitan in conducting the investigation, the Bishops of the respective Province, individually or together, may establish lists of qualified persons from which the Metropolitan may choose those most suitable to assist in the investigation, according to the needs of the individual case and, in particular, taking into account the cooperation that can be offered by the lay faithful pursuant to canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO.

§2. The Metropolitan, however, is free to choose other equally qualified persons.

§3. Any person assisting the Metropolitan in the investigation is required to act impartially and must be free of conflicts of interest. If he considers himself to be in a conflict of interest or be unable to maintain the necessary impartiality required to guarantee the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to recuse himself and report the circumstances to the Metropolitan.

§4. The persons assisting the Metropolitan shall take an oath to fulfil their charge properly.

§1. List of Qualified Persons and Their Involvements

Article 2 was speaking about the provisions that might be adopted by the Episcopal Conferences, by Synod of Bishops either of the Patriarchal Churches and of the Major Archiepiscopal Churches, or by the council of hierarchy of the Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*. This article too speaks about the directives by the same regarding how to assist the Metropolitan in conducting the investigation. Taking into account of these directives the Bishops of the respective provinces either individually or together might establish a list of qualified persons. According to the needs of the individual cases, the Metropolitan may choose from these the most suitable persons to assist in the investigation. When he takes into account of the needs of the individual cases in particular, he should look into the cooperation that can be offered by the lay faithful in accordance with the canons 228 of

CIC 1983 and 408 of CCEO 1990. According to these canons, lay people who excel in the necessary knowledge, experience and integrity, can be heard as experts or consultants by the ecclesiastical authorities. Here, the *Motu Proprio* highlights the possibility of having recourse to the help of lay faithful, qualified and suitable, thus putting into practice the indication given to Pastors of "willingly making use of their prudent counsel."⁵² an indication enunciated later in CIC 1983 and CCEO 1990 "the laity who are distinguished by adequate knowledge, out of prudence and honesty, are able to help the pastors of the Church as experts or counselors, even in councils according to the norm of law."⁵³

§2. Freedom to choose any Appropriate Persons Qualified

The second paragraph gives freedom to the Metropolitan to choose any other equally qualified persons. That means it is not necessary or compulsory for the Metropolitan to choose only those who are in the list established by the Bishops of the province. Depending of the needs of the individual cases he is free to choose the most suitable persons.

§3. Integrity of Qualified Persons

The third paragraph demands the persons who assist the Metropolitan in such investigations to acts impartially and without conflicts of interest. If one who assists believes he or she is in a conflict of interest or unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to ensure the integrity of the investigation, he or she is required to abstain and report the matter to the Metropolitan. For ensuring the justice, impartiality is necessary and there should not be any conflict of interest and if the person assisting the investigation is unable to do so it may lead to the denial of true justice.

§4. Need of Oath

The persons assisting Metropolitan in such cases is to take an oath to fulfil the tasks given to them properly and faithfully. "An oath is the invocation of divine name as witness to the truth."⁵⁴ And oath of fidelity is a serious religious act, here the persons assisting the investigator call upon God to witness the sincerity and reliability of

⁵² *Lumen Gentium*, 37.

⁵³ Canons 228 CIC 1983; 408 CCEO 1990.

⁵⁴ Canons 1199 CIC 1983; 895 CCEO 1990.

one's promise to fulfill the responsibilities assumed.⁵⁵ They are bound to fulfill properly the tasks given to them.

14. Duration of the Investigation

Article 14

§1. The investigation is to be completed within the term of ninety days or within a term otherwise provided for by the instructions referred to in article 10 §2.

§2. Where there are just reasons, the Metropolitan may request that the competent Dicastery extend the term.

§1. Time Limit for the Investigation

This article gives the time limit for the investigation. Once the Metropolitan receives the mandate to conduct the investigation, he should complete it within the term of ninety days or the term otherwise provided by the competent dicastery in the instructions given to the Metropolitan. That would mean that normally the term is ninety days but the dicastery could decide otherwise, it can reduce the days as well as increase the days of the term depending on the individual cases and its circumstances. Though the term is ninety days, the investigator is to give a report to the competent dicastery every thirty days.⁵⁶

§2. Extending the Time Limit

In case of just reasons, the Metropolitan may request the extension of the term to the competent Dicastery. In some cases, it may not be possible to complete the investigations within ninety days of the specified term given by the competent dicastery. In such cases, the Metropolitan may ask the dicastery to extend the deadline given for the investigations. For this, he has to give the just reasons. Depending on the individual cases and situations and examining the reasons the competent dicastery may or may not extend the term.

15. Precautionary Measures

Article 15

Should the facts or circumstances require it, the Metropolitan shall propose to the competent Dicastery, the adoption of

⁵⁵ Cf. J. P. Beal *et alii* (eds), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 987.

⁵⁶ *Vos estis lux mundi*, Article 12 §9.

provisions or appropriate precautionary measures with regard to the person under investigation.

If the facts or circumstances so require, the Metropolitan shall propose to the competent dicastery the adoption of provisions or appropriate preventive measures to the person who is under investigation. Canon 1722 of CIC 1983 and 1473 of CCEO 1990 speak about the power of the Ordinary to impose precautionary measure. Here the Metropolitan doesn't have the power to impose the precautionary measure so that he should ask the competent dicastery to impose it if the circumstances require it. Some canonists call it as imposing an "administrative Leave."⁵⁷ The purpose of these precautionary measures are given in the same canons. The precautionary measures are neither intended as penalties nor as steps indicative of guilt of the accused person. The provisions of canon 1722 help us to enlighten the goals of the precautionary measures. These goals are said to be taxatively listed, which implies that they may be invoked only for the reasons stated, to prevent scandal, to protect the freedom of the witnesses and to safeguard the course of justice.⁵⁸

To Prevent Scandal: Two extremes may prove counter productive to this purpose. On the one hand, to keep the deliberation secret in the interest of protecting the Church from the adverse publicity; on the other hand, a hasty confrontation of the accused. At any rate, ignoring the scandal may all the more compound the situation. For example, if an accused is permitted to continue in an unrestricted ministry while serious public accusations are investigated, it may scandalize the

⁵⁷ Cf. V. Tamayo, "Canonico-Pastoral Implications of Placing a Cleric on 'Administrative Leave,'" in *Philippine Canonical Forum*, 5 (2003), 113-146; B. Daly, "Administrative Leave of the Priest Accused of Sexual Abuse," in *CLSA Advisory Opinions 2001-2005*, 473-475; J. P. Beal, "Administrative Leave: Canon 1722 Revisited," in *Studia canonica*, 27 (1993), 293-320; B. F. Griffin, "Canon 1722: Imposition of Administrative Leave against an Accused," 485-489; G. Ingels, "Placing a Priest on 'Administrative Leave' During the investigation of the Alleged Misconduct," in *CLSA Advisory Opinions 2001-2005*, 470-473; P. J. Cogan and F. G. Morrissey, "Precept Imposing 'Administrative Leave,'" in *CLSA Advisory Opinions 2001-2005*, 476-478.

⁵⁸ Cf. V. Tamayo, "Canonico-Pastoral Implications of Placing a Cleric on 'Administrative Leave,'" 137; J. P. Beal, "Administrative Leave: Canon 1722 Revisited," 295-296; B. F. Griffin, "Canon 1722: Imposition of Administrative Leave against an Accused," 485-489.

faithful. Placing the accused on administrative leave shows that justice expeditiously works in the Church.⁵⁹

To Protect the Freedom of the Witnesses: The welfare of the community, especially of the witnesses, may require the limiting of the exercise of the office of the accused, even before the process begins. A public promise of the accused that he would not contact in any way the witnesses in a given case could be rescinded in place of other precautionary measures.⁶⁰ Such measures may be pastorally more effective.

To Safeguard the Course of Justice: The course of justice includes, along with the judicial process, the entire concern of the Church for justice toward the accused, the possible victim and the entire community.⁶¹ It is possible that the accused is in an influential office or ministry to exert certain pressures on the process. For this reason, appropriate precautionary measures should be imposed, so that the path of justice may not be thwarted.⁶²

16. Establishment of A Fund

Article 16

§1. Ecclesiastical Provinces, Episcopal Conferences, Synods of Bishops and Councils of Hierarchs may create a fund, to be established according to the norms of canons 116 and 1303 §1, 1° CIC and 1047 CCEO and administered according to the norms of canon law, whose purpose is to sustain the costs of the investigations.

§2. At the request of the appointed Metropolitan, the funds necessary for the purpose of the investigation are made available to him by the administrator of the fund; the Metropolitan remain

⁵⁹ Cf. V. Tamayo, "Canonico-Pastoral Implications of Placing a Cleric on 'Administrative Leave,'" 115-116; V. DE PAOLIS, "Penal Sanctions, Penal Remedies and Penances in Canon Law," in P. M. Dugan (ed.), *The Penal Process and Protection of Rights in Canon Law*, Montreal, 2005, 170.

⁶⁰ Cf. E. Peters, *Penal Procedural Law in the 1983 Code of Canon Law*, 330; B. F. Griffin, "The Reassignment of a Cleric who has been Professionally Evaluated and Treated for Sexual Misconduct with Minors: Canonical Considerations," in *The Jurist*, 51 (1991), 337.

⁶¹ Cf. B. F. Griffin, "Canon 1722: Imposition of Administrative Leave against an Accused," 488.

⁶² Cf. V. Tamayo, "Canonico-Pastoral Implications of Placing a Cleric on 'Administrative Leave,'" 116.

duty-bound to present an account to the administrator at the conclusion of the investigation.

§1. Creation and Administration of a Fund

In financial support of the investigations, it is foreseen that depending on the manner which is considered appropriate, the Bishops' Conferences, the Provinces and Synods of Bishops and the council of hierarchs, can establish "autonomous foundations."⁶³ This fund should be established according to the norms of the canon 116 and 1303 §1, 1° of CIC 1983 and 1047 of CCEO 1990 which speaks about the aggregate of persons and aggregate of things. It should be administered according to the norms of canon law in order to sustain the cost of investigation.

§2. Use of the Fund and Its Accountability

If a Metropolitan is appointed for such an investigation, at his request the administrator of the fund may make available to him the necessary fund for the purpose of the investigation. The Metropolitan may make use of the fund for the investigation responsibly and at the end of the investigation he is bound to present and account of it to the administrator of such funds.

17. Transmission of the Documents and *Votum*

Article 17

§1. Having completed the investigation, the Metropolitan shall transmit the acts to the competent Dicastery, together with his *votum* regarding the results of the investigation and in response to any queries contained in the instructions issued under article 10 §2.

§2. Unless there are further instructions from the competent Dicastery, the faculties of the Metropolitan cease once the investigation is completed.

§3. In compliance with the instructions of the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan, upon request, shall inform the person who has alleged an offence, or his/her legal representatives, of the outcome of the investigation.

⁶³ Cf. J. I. Arrieta, "Explanatory Note: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*," accessed on 08/11/2019.

§1. *The Result of the Investigation to Competent Dicastery with Votum*

Once the Metropolitan completes the investigation, all the acts are to be forwarded to the competent dicastery. That is the collection of all the documents and testimonies relating to allegations of delicts. Along with the acts, he should also send his *votum* on the results of the investigation. It is an authoritative opinion; in forwarding a case to the competent dicastery, the Metropolitan offers authoritative opinion on the matter addressed in the particular case. This should also address all the queries that were given in the instruction issued by the dicastery while giving him the competence to investigate the case. The *votum* will play an important role in the determination of the competent dicastery whether or not further canonical action is warranted. Usually the *votum* includes a *curriculum vitae* of the accused, details of the allegation, an assessment and the opinion of the investigator with regard to a particular case.

§2. *Cessation of the Mandate*

Upon the completion of the investigation and transmission of the acts and the *votum* to the competent dicastery, the competence of the Metropolitan over the case ceases in ordinary circumstance. Because by the completion or fulfillment of the mandate the delegated power ceases.⁶⁴ But if the competent dicastery gives any further instructions, he is to fulfil them, the dicastery could extend his competence for the further actions.

§3. *Informing the Outcome of the Investigation to the Accused*

Once the investigation is over, the Metropolitan has to abide by the instructions given to him by the competent dicastery. If there is a request, he may inform the accused person or the legal representative of the accused about the outcome of the investigation. But to do so the Metropolitan has to abide by the instructions given by the competent dicastery.

18. Subsequent Measures

Article 18

Unless it decides to provide for a supplementary investigation, the competent Dicastery proceeds in accordance with the law provided for the specific case.

⁶⁴ Canons 142 §1 CIC 1983; 992 CCEO 1990.

If the competent dicastery is not satisfied with the investigation it may decide to have a supplementary investigation and provide the means for it. It can give further instructions to the Metropolitan by extending his competence to have the supplementary investigation.⁶⁵ Or it can ask someone else to carry out a supplementary investigation. If the dicastery is satisfied with the investigations it makes a determination of how to proceed with the cases depending on the delict. In accordance with the law provided for such delicts, the dicastery proceeds with further steps of action.

19. Compliance with State Laws

Article 19

These norms apply without prejudice to the rights and obligations established in each place by state laws, particularly those concerning any reporting obligations to the competent civil authorities.

The final article states that these norms apply without prejudice to the rights and obligations imposed by state laws, in particular those relating to any reporting obligations to the civil authorities. In the year 2011, the CDF in its circular letter had stated the importance of cooperating with the civil authorities with regard to the cases of the sexual abuse of minors. Because these are not only canonical delicts they are also crimes punished by the civil law. Though the rules in various countries differ, it is very important to cooperate with such authorities within the responsibilities of each one. Without prejudice to the sacramental internal forum, the regulations given by the civil law about reporting of such crime to the competent authority should be followed.⁶⁶ It shows the clear stand of Church with regard to its cooperation with civil authorities on criminal matters. Because a healthy collaboration, respectful of the mutual autonomy, between the canonical and the state regulations can only favor the good of the people and the search for truth.⁶⁷ As a sign of transparency and openness, the supreme pontiff has abolished the pontifical secrecy

⁶⁵ Article 17 §2.

⁶⁶ CDF, Circular Letter to assist Episcopal Conferences in Developing Guidelines for Dealing with Cases of Sexual Abuses of Minors Perpetrated by Clerics, 3 May 2011, in http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20110503_abuso-minori_en.html, accessed on 18-08-2019.

⁶⁷ Cf. F. Iannone, "Nota Esplicativa: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*," accessed on 8-11-2019.

over the cases of sexual abuse of minors, of sexual violence and of child pornography.⁶⁸ The instruction states: "Office confidentiality shall not prevent the fulfilment of the obligations laid down in all places by civil laws, including any reporting obligations, and the execution of enforceable requests of civil judicial authorities".⁶⁹ At the same time, in order to protect the good name, image and privacy of all the persons involved the information received in such cases should be treated in such a way as to ensure the integrity, confidentiality and security in accordance with the prescriptions of the canons 471, 1^o CIC 1983 and 244 §2, 2^o CCEO 1990.⁷⁰ In other words, abolishing of pontifical secrecy in such criminal actions does not mean that it provides the freedom to make it public by those who such knowledge. But the professional secrecy which must be observed in these cases is in no way an obstacle to fulfill the obligations laid down by the civil law.⁷¹ The documents of a penal trial is not a public domain. If the civil authorities require any of the documents of such cases for the investigation proper procedures should be followed for that purpose. For example, for the information that the Holy See is requested to share, the international rules are to be followed. There should be a specific request, and all the formalities of international law must be followed. On the other hand, at the local level, for the documents that are kept in the diocesan archives are requested, the competent legal authorities should forward the request to the diocesan Bishop.⁷² The documents that are kept in the archives of the Church can now be handed over to the the competent legal authorities when requested to the lawful Church authorities in the repectives countries.

The norms of *Vos estis lux mundi*, is applied for three years *ad experimentum*. It enters into force on 1 June 2019. Usually a universal law take force only after three months of its establishment, unless the

⁶⁸ Rescriptum Ex Audientia SS.MI: Rescript of the Holy Father Francis to promulgate the Instruction on the Confidentiality of Legal Proceedings, 6 December 2019 in [https:// press.vatican.va/ content/ salastampa/ en/bollettino/ pubblico/ 2019/12/17/191217b.html](https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/17/191217b.html), accessed on 26/12/2019.

⁶⁹ Instruction on the Confidentiality of Legal Proceedings, 4.

⁷⁰ Instruction on the Confidentiality of Legal Proceedings, 3.

⁷¹ J. I. Arrieta, "Confidentiality and Duty oto report" in [https:// press.vatican.va/ content/ salastampa/ en/ bollettino/ pubblico/ 2019/12/17/191217f.html](https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/17/191217f.html), accessed on 26/12/2019.

⁷² [https:// press.vatican.va/ content/ salastampa/ en/ bollettino/ pubblico/ 2019/12/17/ 191217e.html](https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/17/191217e.html), accessed on 30/12/2019.

law itself has specifically or expressly established a shorter period.⁷³ This is an example of shorter period, the legislator himself has given the date from which it takes force.

Conclusion

"No abuse should ever be covered up ... or not taken sufficiently seriously, since the covering up of abuses favours the spread of evil and adds a further level of scandal."⁷⁴ Therefore, for the Church developing a new and effective approach of prevention of crimes in all spheres was necessary. Intention of Supreme Pontiff is to draw the channels of transmission of safe and faithful information, insitisting autonomous and coordinated lines of action, directing a tight schedule and making everything possible to overcome the distances and respecting the distinctiveness of each place. The choice of the Roman Pontiff was definite, of great courage and, above all, one of confidence in the action of Providence that aims to "look with hope towards the future."⁷⁵ Infact, over the centuries Church has established legal provision for punishing the culprits in case of any abuses especially by those in authority (who do not have a superior authority below the Roman Pontiff) through the representatives of Roman Pontiff. With this Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*, Church is trying to combine all these methods, with procedures that give proximity to the places where the abuse had occurred. Thus, it becomes easier for the victims to approach the appropriate authority to demand justice. The two rescripts that published after *Vos estis lux mundi* is also an attempt from the part of the Roman Pontiff to bring the law abreast to the need of the time. The authorities have come out with the commitment to root out the problem. What is most important is that each one is living a spiritual life based on the morality, because with the spiritual life is neglected the external structures would not serve any purpose.⁷⁶

⁷³ Canon 8 CIC 1983.

⁷⁴ Francis, Address at the End of the Eucharistic Concelebration for the Meeting "The Protection of Minors in the Church", accessed on 8-11-2019.

⁷⁵ J. I. Arrieta, "Explanatory Note: Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*", accessed on 08/11/2019.

⁷⁶ John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo millennio ineunte*, 6 January 2001, in AAS 93 (2001), 297.