

VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI – TABELLAE COMPARATIVAE (rev. 27 March 2023; Deepl.com translation)

VELM/2019 ¹	VELM/2023 ²
APOSTOLIC LETTER	APOSTOLIC LETTER
IN THE FORM OF 'MOTU PROPRIO	IN THE FORM OF 'MOTU PROPRIO
OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF	OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF
FRANCIS	FRANCIS
" <i>VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI</i> "	" <i>VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI</i> "
" <i>You are the light of the world; a city standing on a mountain cannot remain hidden</i> " (Mt 5:14). Our Lord Jesus Christ calls every believer to be a shining example of virtue, integrity and holiness. Indeed, all of us are called to give concrete witness to faith in Christ in our lives and, in particular, in our relationship with our neighbour.	" <i>You are the light of the world; a city standing on a mountain cannot remain hidden</i> " (Mt 5:14). Our Lord Jesus Christ calls every believer to be a shining example of virtue, integrity and holiness. Indeed, all of us are called to give concrete witness to faith in Christ in our lives and, in particular, in our relationship with our neighbour.
Crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual harm to their victims, and harm the community of the faithful. To ensure that such phenomena, in all their forms, no longer occur, there is a need for a continuous and profound conversion of hearts, evidenced by concrete and effective actions involving everyone in the Church, so that personal holiness and moral commitment can contribute to promoting the full credibility of the Gospel proclamation and the effectiveness of the Church's mission. This only becomes possible with the grace of the Holy Spirit poured into hearts, because we must always remember the words of Jesus: ' <i>Without</i>	Crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual harm to their victims, and harm the community of the faithful. To ensure that such phenomena, in all their forms, no longer occur, there is a need for a continuous and profound conversion of hearts, evidenced by concrete and effective actions involving everyone in the Church, so that personal holiness and moral commitment can contribute to promoting the full credibility of the Gospel proclamation and the effectiveness of the Church's mission. This only becomes possible with the grace of the Holy Spirit poured into hearts, for we must always remember the words of Jesus: ' <i>Without me</i>

¹ Franciscus, litterae apostolicae *motu proprio* datae *Vos estis lux mundi*, 7 May 2019: AAS 111 (2019) [hereinafter *VELM/2019*] 823-832.

² idem, litterae apostolicae *motu proprio* datae *Vos estis lux mundi*, 25 March 2023, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/motu_proprio/documents/20230325-motu-proprio-vos-estis-lux-mundi-aggiornato.html (accessed 25 March 2023) (2023) [hereinafter *VELM/2023*].

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<i>me you can do nothing'</i> (Jn 15:5). Even though so much has already been done, we must continue to learn from the bitter lessons of the past, in order to look to the future with hope.	<i>you can do nothing'</i> (Jn 15:5). Although so much has already been done, we must continue to learn from the bitter lessons of the past, in order to look to the future with hope.
This responsibility falls, first and foremost, on the successors of the Apostles, appointed by God for the pastoral guidance of His people, and demands of them the commitment to follow closely in the footsteps of the Divine Master. By reason of their ministry, in fact, they rule "the particular Churches entrusted to them as vicars and legates of Christ, by counsel, persuasion, and example, but also by authority and sacred power, which they use only to edify their flock in truth and holiness, remembering that he who is greater must act as the lesser, and he who is the chief, as he who serves" (Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Const. Lumen Gentium , 27). What more strictly concerns the successors of the Apostles, concerns all those who in various ways assume ministries in the Church, profess the evangelical counsels or are called to serve the Christian People. Therefore, it is good that procedures be universally adopted to prevent and counter these crimes that betray the trust of the faithful.	This responsibility falls, first and foremost, on the successors of the Apostles, appointed by God for the pastoral guidance of His people, and demands of them the commitment to follow closely in the footsteps of the Divine Master. By reason of their ministry, in fact, they rule "the particular Churches entrusted to them as vicars and legates of Christ, by counsel, persuasion, and example, but also by authority and sacred power, which they use only to edify their flock in truth and holiness, remembering that he who is greater must act as the lesser, and he who is the chief, as he who serves" (Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Const. Lumen Gentium , 27). What more strictly concerns the successors of the Apostles, concerns all those who in various ways assume ministries in the Church, profess the evangelical counsels or are called to serve the Christian People. Therefore, it is good that procedures be universally adopted to prevent and counter these crimes that betray the trust of the faithful.
<i>I want this commitment to be implemented in a fully ecclesial manner, and thus to be an expression of the communion that holds us together, listening to each other and open to the contributions of those who care about this conversion process.</i>	To this end, on 7 May 2019 I promulgated an Apostolic Letter in the form of a Motu Proprio containing norms ad experimentum for a three-year period.
<i>I therefore decree:</i>	Now, after the established time has elapsed, considering the observations received from the Bishops' Conferences and the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, having evaluated the experience of these years, in order to favour a better application of what has been established, without prejudice to the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches on penal and procedural matters, I hereby decree:
TITLE I	TITLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS	GENERAL PROVISIONS
Article 1 - Scope of Application	Article 1 - Scope of Application

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§1. These norms apply in the case of reports concerning clerics or members of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life and concerning	§1. The present norms apply in the case of reports concerning clerics, members of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life and moderators of international associations of the faithful recognised or erected by the Apostolic See concerning:
(a) <u>offences against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue consisting of:</u>	a)
i. <u>forcing someone</u> , by violence or threat or by abuse of authority, to <i>perform</i> or be subjected to sexual acts;	* an offence against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed with violence or threat or by abuse of authority, or in coercing someone to perform or undergo sexual acts; ³
ii. <i>engaging in sexual acts with a</i> minor or vulnerable person;	** a crime against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed with a minor or a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason or a vulnerable adult; ⁴
iii. <i>in the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by telematic means, of child pornography,</i>	*** the immoral acquisition, storage, exhibition or dissemination, in any way and by any means, of pornographic images of minors or persons who habitually have an impaired use of reason; ⁵
<i>as well as in the</i> recruitment or inducement of <i>a</i> minor or vulnerable <i>person</i> to participate in pornographic performances;	**** the recruitment or inducement of a minor or a person who habitually has an impaired use of reason or a vulnerable adult to exhibit pornography or to participate in real or simulated pornographic performances; ⁶
(b) conduct by the persons referred to in Article 6 consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or circumvent civil investigations or canonical, administrative or criminal investigations of a <i>cleric or religious regarding the</i> offences referred to in point (a) of this paragraph.	(b) conduct by the persons referred to in Article 6, consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or circumvent civil investigations or canonical, administrative or criminal investigations of any of the persons referred to in §1 above in respect of the offences referred to in point (a) of this paragraph.
§2. For the purposes of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:	§2. For the purposes of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:
(a) ' <i>child</i> ' means any person below the age of eighteen years <i>or by law treated as such</i> ;	(a) " <i>minor</i> " shall mean any person below the age of eighteen years; a person habitually suffering from the imperfect use of reason shall be equated with a minor ;

³ Cf. CIC, c. 1395 §3. " ... the cleric who by violence, threats or abuse of authority commits a crime against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue or forces someone to perform or undergo sexual acts."

⁴ Cf. CIC, c. 1398 §1, 1°. The cleric "who commits a crime against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with a minor or with a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason or with one to whom the law accords equal protection."

⁵ Cf. CIC, c. 1398 §1, 3°. The cleric "who immorally acquires, preserves, exhibits or divulges, in any way and by any means, pornographic images of minors or of persons who habitually have an imperfect use of reason."

⁶ Cf. CIC, c. 1398 §1, 2°. The cleric "who recruits or induces a minor, or a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason or one to whom the law recognises equal protection, to show himself pornographically or to participate in real or simulated pornographic exhibitions."

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(b) " <i>vulnerable person</i> " shall mean any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which in fact, even occasionally, limits his or her capacity to understand or to resist the offence;	(b) " <i>vulnerable adult</i> " means any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which in fact, even occasionally, limits his or her capacity to understand or will or otherwise resist the offence;
(c) ' <i>child sexual abuse material</i> ' means any depiction of a child, regardless of the medium used, engaged in real or simulated sexually explicit activities, and any depiction of the sexual organs of children for <i>primarily sexual</i> purposes.	(c) ' <i>child pornography material</i> ' means any depiction of a child, irrespective of the medium used, involved in real or simulated sexually explicit activities, and any depiction of the sexual organs of minors for the purposes of lust or profit .
Article 2 - Receipt of alerts and data protection	Article 2 - Receipt of alerts and data protection
§1. Taking into account any indications that may have been adopted by the respective Episcopal Conferences, by the Synods of Bishops of the Patriarchal Churches and Major Archiepiscopal Churches, or by the Councils of Hierarchs of the Metropolitan Churches <i>sui iuris</i> , the Dioceses or Eparchies, individually or together, must <i>establish, within one year of the coming into force of the present norms, one or more stable and easily accessible systems</i> for the public to <i>submit</i> reports, <i>including through the establishment of a special ecclesiastical office. Dioceses and Eparchies shall inform the Papal Representative of the establishment of the systems referred to in this paragraph.</i>	§1. Taking into account any indications adopted by the respective Episcopal Conferences, by the Synods of Bishops of the Patriarchal Churches and Major Archiepiscopal Churches, or by the Councils of Hierarchs of the Metropolitan Churches <i>sui iuris</i> , the Dioceses or Eparchies, individually or together, must be provided with bodies or offices easily accessible to the public for the reception of reports. Reports must be submitted to these ecclesiastical bodies or offices.
§2. The information referred to in this Article shall be protected and handled in such a way as to guarantee its security, integrity and confidentiality in accordance with canons 471, 2nd CIC and 244 §2, 2nd CCEO.	§2. The information referred to in this Article shall be protected and handled in such a way as to guarantee its security, integrity and confidentiality in accordance with canons 471, 2nd CIC and 244 §2, 2nd CCEO.
§3. Without prejudice to what is laid down in Article 3 §3, the Ordinary who has received the report shall forward it without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the facts are alleged to have occurred, as well as to the Ordinary proper to the person reported, <i>who shall proceed in accordance with the law</i> as laid down for the specific case.	§3. Without prejudice to what is laid down in Article 3 §3, the Ordinary who has received the report shall forward it without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the events occurred and to the Ordinary proper to the person reported. Unless the two Ordinaries agree otherwise, it is for the Ordinary of the place where the events are alleged to have occurred to proceed in accordance with the law as provided for the specific case.
§4. For the purposes of this Title, dioceses shall be equated with eparchies and the Ordinary shall be equated with the hierarch.	§4. For the purposes of this Title, dioceses shall be equated with eparchies and the Ordinary shall be equated with the hierarch.
Article 3 - Reporting	Article 3 - Reporting

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§1. Except <i>in the cases envisaged in canons 1548 §2 CIC and 1229 §2 CCEO</i> , whenever a cleric or member of an institute of consecrated life or of a society of apostolic life has knowledge of or reasonable grounds for believing that one of the acts mentioned in article 1 has been committed, he is obliged to <i>report the fact</i> without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the act is alleged to have occurred or to another Ordinary from among those mentioned in canons 134 CIC and 984 CCEO, without prejudice to what is stipulated in §3 of the present article.	§1. Except in the case of knowledge of the information by a cleric in the exercise of his ministry in the internal forum , whenever a cleric or a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or of a Society of Apostolic Life has knowledge or reasonable grounds for believing that one of the facts mentioned in article 1 has been committed, he is obliged to report it promptly to the Ordinary of the place where the facts allegedly occurred or to another Ordinary from among those mentioned in canons 134 CIC and 984 CCEO, without prejudice to what is stipulated in §3 of the present article.
§2. Any person may submit a report concerning <i>the conduct</i> referred to in Article 1, using the methods set out in the preceding Article or in any other appropriate manner.	§2. Any person, in particular the lay faithful who hold offices or exercise ministries in the Church , may make a report concerning one of the facts set out in Article 1, using the procedures set out in the preceding Article or in any other appropriate manner.
§3. When the report concerns one of the persons indicated in Article 6, it shall be addressed to the Authority identified in accordance with Articles 8 and 9. The report may always be addressed <i>to the Holy See</i> , either directly or through the Pontifical Representative.	§3. When the report concerns one of the persons indicated in Article 6, it shall be addressed to the Authority identified on the basis of Articles 8 and 9. The report may always be addressed to the competent Dicastery , either directly or through the Pontifical Representative. In the first case the Dicastery shall inform the Pontifical Representative.
§4. The report shall <i>contain</i> the most circumstantial elements possible, such as indications of the time and place of the facts, the persons involved or informed, and any other circumstances that may be useful to ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.	§4. The report must contain the most circumstantial elements possible, such as indications of the time and place of the facts, the persons involved or informed, and any other circumstances that may be useful to ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.
§5. Information may also be acquired <i>ex officio</i> .	§5. Information may also be acquired <i>ex officio</i> .
Article 4 - Protection of whistleblowers	Article 4 - Protection of whistleblowers
§1. Making an alert pursuant to Article 3 does not constitute a breach of professional secrecy.	§1. Making an alert pursuant to Article 3 does not constitute a breach of professional secrecy.
§2. Without prejudice to the provisions of Canon 1390 CIC and Canons 1452 and 1454 CCEO, prejudice, retaliation or discrimination <i>for</i> filing a report is prohibited and may constitute conduct under Article 1 §1(b).	§2. Without prejudice to the provisions of Canon 1390 CIC and Canons 1452 and 1454 CCEO, prejudice, retaliation or discrimination for filing a report is prohibited and may constitute conduct under Article 1 §1(b).
§3. No constraint of silence may be imposed on the person making an alert as to its content.	§3. No constraint of silence may be imposed on the person making a report, on the person claiming to have been wronged and on witnesses as to the content of the report, subject to Article 5 §2.
Art. 5 - Care of Persons	Art. 5 - Care of Persons
§1. Church authorities shall ensure that those who claim to have been offended, together with their families, are treated with dignity and respect, and offer them, in particular:	§1. Church authorities shall ensure that those who claim to have been offended, together with their families, are treated with dignity and respect, and offer them, in particular:

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(a) reception, listening and accompaniment, including through specific services;	(a) reception, listening and accompaniment, including through specific services;
(b) spiritual assistance;	(b) spiritual assistance;
(c) medical, therapeutic and psychological assistance, depending on the specific case.	(c) medical, therapeutic and psychological assistance, depending on the specific case.
§2. <i>The image and privacy of the persons involved and the confidentiality of personal data are protected.</i>	§2. The legitimate protection of good reputation and the privacy of all persons concerned, as well as the confidentiality of personal data, must in any case be safeguarded. The presumption of Article 13 §7 shall apply to reported persons, subject to Article 20.
TITLE II	TITLE II
PROVISIONS CONCERNING BISHOPS AND THEIR EQUIVALENT	PROVISIONS CONCERNING BISHOPS AND THEIR EQUIVALENT
Article 6 - Scope of application	Article 6 - Scope of application
The procedural rules set out in this Title concern the conduct referred to in Article 1, committed by:	The procedural rules laid down in this Title concern the offences and conduct referred to in Article 1, committed by
a) Cardinals, Patriarchs, Bishops and Legates of the Roman Pontiff;	a) Cardinals, Patriarchs, Bishops and Legates of the Roman Pontiff;
b) clerics who are or have been in the pastoral leadership of a particular Church or an entity assimilated to it, whether Latin or Eastern, including personal Ordinariates, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> ;	b) clerics who are or have been entrusted with the pastoral leadership of a particular Church or an entity assimilated to it, whether Latin or Eastern, including personal Ordinariates, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> ;
c) clerics who are or have been in the pastoral leadership of a personal prelature, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> ;	c) clerics who are or have been entrusted with the pastoral leadership of a personal prelature, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> ;
	d) clerics who are or have been at the head of a public clerical association with the power to incardinate, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i>;
d) those who are or have been Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right, as well as Monasteries <i>sui iuris</i> , for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> .	e) those who are or have been Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right, as well as Monasteries <i>sui iuris</i> , for acts committed <i>durante munere</i> ;
	f) lay faithful who are or have been Moderators of international associations of the faithful recognised or established by the Apostolic See, for acts committed <i>durante munere</i>.
Article 7 - Responsible Department	Article 7 - Responsible Department
§1. For the purposes of this title, " <i>competent Dicastery</i> " means <i>the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith</i> , in respect of offences reserved to <i>it</i> by the norms in force, as well as in all other cases and insofar as it is competent according to the law proper to the Roman Curia:	§1. For the purposes of this title, " <i>competent Dicastery</i> " shall mean the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith , in respect of offences reserved to it by the norms in force, as well as in all other cases and insofar as it is competent according to the proper law of the Roman Curia:

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- <i>the Congregation</i> for the Oriental Churches;	- the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches;
- <i>the Congregation</i> for Bishops;	- the Dicastery for Bishops;
- <i>the Congregation</i> for the Evangelisation of Peoples;	- the Dicastery for Evangelisation;
- <i>the Congregation</i> for the Clergy;	- the Dicastery for the Clergy;
- <i>the Congregation</i> for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.	- the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.
	- the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life.
§2. In order to ensure the best coordination, the competent Dicastery shall inform the Secretariat of State and the other Dicasteries directly concerned of the report and the outcome of the investigation.	§2. In order to ensure the best coordination, the competent Dicastery shall inform 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 shall take place through the Pontifical Representative.	§3. The communications referred to in this title between the Metropolitan and the Holy See shall take place through the Pontifical Representative.
Art. 8 - Procedure in the case of an alert concerning a Bishop of the Latin Church	Art. 8 - Procedure in the case of an alert concerning a Bishop of the Latin Church and other persons mentioned in Art. 6
§1. The authority receiving a report shall transmit it both to the <i>Holy See</i> and to the Metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province in which the reported person is domiciled.	§1. The authority receiving a report shall forward it both to the competent Dicastery and to the Metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province in which the reported person 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 most senior suffragan Bishop by promotion to whom, in this case, the following provisions concerning the Metropolitan shall apply.	§2. If the notification concerns the Metropolitan, or the Metropolitan See is vacant, it is forwarded to the Holy See, as well as to the most senior suffragan Bishop by promotion to whom, in this case, the following provisions concerning the Metropolitan apply. Similarly, the notification concerning those who are at the pastoral head of ecclesiastical circumscriptions immediately subject to the Holy See itself shall be forwarded to the Holy See.
§3. If the report concerns a Papal Legate, it is transmitted directly to the Secretariat of State.	§3. If the report concerns a Papal Legate, it is transmitted directly to the Secretariat of State.
Art. 9 - Procedure applicable to Bishops of Eastern Churches	Art. 9 - Procedure applicable to Bishops of the Oriental Churches and other persons referred to in Art. 6
§1. In the case of a report against a Bishop of a Patriarchal, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan Church <i>sui iuris</i> , it shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan of the Church <i>sui iuris</i> .	§1. In the case of a report against a Bishop, or an equivalent subject , of a Patriarchal, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan Church <i>sui iuris</i> , it shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan of the Church <i>sui iuris</i> .

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§2. If the report concerns a Metropolitan of a Patriarchal or Major Archbishop's Church exercising his office within the territory of these Churches, it shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch or Major Archbishop.	§2. If the report concerns a Metropolitan of a Patriarchal or Major Archbishop's Church exercising his office within the territory of these Churches, it shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch or Major Archbishop.
§3. In the above cases, the authority that received the report shall also forward it <i>to the Holy See</i> .	§3. In the above cases, the authority that received the report shall also forward it to the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches .
§4. If the person reported is a Bishop or Metropolitan outside the territory of the Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal or Metropolitan Church <i>sui iuris</i> , the report is forwarded <i>to the Holy See</i> .	§4. If the person reported is a Bishop or Metropolitan outside the territory of the Patriarchal, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan Church <i>sui iuris</i> , the report is forwarded to the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches, which, if it considers it appropriate, informs the competent Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan Church <i>sui iuris</i> .
§5. If the report concerns a Patriarch, a Major Archbishop, a Metropolitan of a Church <i>sui iuris</i> or a Bishop of the other Oriental Churches <i>sui iuris</i> , it is forwarded <i>to the Holy See</i> .	§5. If the report concerns a Patriarch, a Major Archbishop, a Metropolitan of a Church <i>sui iuris</i> or a Bishop of the other Oriental Churches <i>sui iuris</i> , it is forwarded to the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches .
§6. The following provisions concerning the Metropolitan shall apply to the Ecclesiastical Authority to which the notification is made on the basis of this Article.	§6. The following provisions concerning the Metropolitan shall apply to the Ecclesiastical Authority to which the notification is made on the basis of this Article.
	Art. 10 - Procedure applicable to Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life
	If the report concerns those who are or have been Supreme Moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right, as well as monasteries <i>sui iuris</i> present in Urbe and suburbicarian Dioceses, it is forwarded to the competent Dicastery.
Article 10 - Initial duties of the Metropolitan	Article 11 - Initial duties of the Metropolitan
§1. <i>Unless the report is manifestly unfounded</i> , the Metropolitan shall <i>promptly</i> request the competent Dicastery to undertake the investigation. <u>Should the Metropolitan consider the report manifestly unfounded, he <i>shall</i> inform the Papal Representative.</u>	§1. The Metropolitan who receives the report shall without delay request the competent Dicastery to initiate the investigation.
§2. The Dicastery shall act <i>without delay, and in</i> any case within thirty days of receiving the first report from the Pontifical Representative or the request for assignment from the Metropolitan, giving appropriate instructions as to how to proceed in the specific case.	§2. The Dicastery shall promptly , and in any case within thirty days of receipt of the first report from the Papal Representative or of the request for assignment from the Metropolitan, provide the appropriate instructions as to how to proceed in the specific case.

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	§3. If the Metropolitan considers the report to be manifestly unfounded, he shall, through the Pontifical Representative , inform the competent Dicastery and, unless the latter decides otherwise, order it to be closed.
Article 11 - Entrusting the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan	Article 12 - Entrusting the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan
§1. If the competent Dicastery deems it appropriate to entrust the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan, the latter shall be informed. The Metropolitan hands over all relevant information and documents to the person entrusted by the Dicastery.	§1. If the competent Dicastery, having heard the Pontifical Representative , deems it appropriate to entrust the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan, the latter shall be informed. The Metropolitan hands over all relevant information and documents to the person entrusted by the Dicastery.
§2. In the case referred to in the preceding paragraph, the following provisions concerning the Metropolitan shall apply to the person in charge of conducting the investigation.	§2. In the case referred to in the preceding paragraph, the following provisions concerning the Metropolitan shall apply to the person in charge of conducting the investigation.
Article 12 - Conduct of the investigation	Article 13 - Conduct of the investigation
§1. The Metropolitan, once he has obtained the assignment from the competent Dicastery and in accordance with the instructions he has received, personally or through one or more suitable persons:	§1. The Metropolitan, once he has obtained the assignment from the competent Dicastery and in accordance with the instructions received on how to proceed , personally or through one or more suitable persons:
(a) gather relevant information about the facts;	(a) gather relevant information about the facts;
(b) access to information and documents necessary for the purposes of the investigation held in the archives of ecclesiastical offices;	(b) access to information and documents necessary for the purposes of the investigation held in the archives of ecclesiastical offices;
c) obtain the cooperation of other Ordinaries or Hierarchs where necessary;	c) obtain the cooperation of other Ordinaries or Hierarchs where necessary;
(d) request information from persons and institutions, including civilian ones, that can provide useful elements for the investigation.	(d) request information, if it deems it appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of §7 below, from persons and institutions, including civilian ones, that may be able to provide useful elements for the investigation.
§2. When it becomes necessary to hear <i>a minor or vulnerable person</i> , the Metropolitan shall adopt appropriate arrangements that take into account their status.	§2. When it becomes necessary to hear a minor or vulnerable adult , the Metropolitan shall adopt appropriate arrangements that take into account their condition and the laws of the State .
§3. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that information or documents concerning the investigation may be stolen or destroyed, the Metropolitan shall take the necessary measures for their preservation.	§3. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that information or documents concerning the investigation may be stolen or destroyed, the Metropolitan shall take the necessary measures for their preservation.
§4. Even when he makes use of other persons, the Metropolitan nevertheless remains responsible for the direction and conduct of the investigations, as well as for the punctual execution of the instructions referred to in Article 10 §2.	§4. Even when he makes use of other persons, the Metropolitan nevertheless remains responsible for the direction and conduct of the investigations, as well as for the punctual execution of the instructions referred to in Article 11 §2.
§5. The Metropolitan is assisted by a notary freely chosen in accordance with canons 483 §2 CIC and 253 §2 CCEO.	§5. The Metropolitan is assisted by a notary freely chosen in accordance with canons 483 §2 CIC and 253 §2 CCEO.

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§6. The Metropolitan is obliged to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. Should he feel that he has a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to ensure the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to abstain and report the circumstance to the competent Department.	§6. The Metropolitan is obliged to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. Should he feel that he has a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to ensure the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to abstain and report the circumstance to the competent Department.
	Similarly, anyone who believes there is such a conflict of interest in the case is obliged to contact the competent department.
§7. The suspect shall be presumed innocent.	§7. The suspect shall always be presumed innocent and his good name legitimately protected.
§8. The Metropolitan, if requested by the competent Dicastery, informs the person of the investigation against him, he hears the facts and invites him to present a statement of defence. In such cases, the person under investigation may have recourse to a prosecutor.	§8. The Metropolitan, if requested by the competent Dicastery, informs the person of the investigation against him, he hears the facts and invites him to present a statement of defence. In such cases, the person under investigation may have recourse to a prosecutor.
§9. <i>Every thirty days</i> , the Metropolitan sends the competent department a report on the status of the investigation.	§9. Periodically, according to the indications received , the Metropolitan transmits a report on the status of the investigation to the competent Dicastery.
Art. 13 - Involvement of qualified persons	Art. 14 - Involvement of Qualified Persons
§1. In accordance with the directives, if any, of the Episcopal Conference, the Synod of Bishops or the Council of Hierarchs concerning the manner of assisting the Metropolitan in the investigation, the Bishops of the respective Province, individually or jointly, may <i>draw up</i> lists of qualified persons from among whom the Metropolitan may choose those most suitable to assist him in the investigation, according to the needs of the case and, in particular, taking into account the cooperation that may be offered by the laity in accordance with canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO.	§1. In accordance with the possible directives of the Episcopal Conference, the Synod of Bishops or the Council of Hierarchs on how to assist the Metropolitan in the investigation, it is very convenient that the Bishops of the respective Province, individually or together, establish lists of qualified persons from among whom the Metropolitan can choose those most suitable to assist him in the investigation, according to the needs of the case and, in particular, taking into account the cooperation that can be offered by the laity in accordance with canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO.
§2. The Metropolitan is however free to choose other equally qualified persons.	§2. The Metropolitan is however free to choose other equally qualified persons.
§3. Anyone assisting the Metropolitan in the investigation is obliged to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. If he believes he has a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to ensure the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to abstain and report the circumstance to the Metropolitan.	§3. Anyone assisting the Metropolitan in the investigation is obliged to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. If he believes he has a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to ensure the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to abstain and report the circumstance to the Metropolitan.
§4. The persons assisting the Metropolitan take an oath to conveniently and faithfully fulfil the office.	§4. The persons assisting the Metropolitan take an oath to properly and faithfully discharge the office, in accordance with Article 13 §7.

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Article 14 - Duration of the investigation	Art. 15 - Duration of the investigation
§1. The investigation must be concluded within the <i>ninety-day period or within the period</i> indicated in the instructions referred to in Article 10 §2.	§1. The investigation must be concluded within a short time and in any case within the time specified in the instructions referred to in Article 11 §2.
§2. If there are justified reasons, the Metropolitan may request an extension of the time limit from the competent Dicastery.	§2. If there are justified reasons and after having sent a report on the state of the investigation , the Metropolitan may request an extension of the time limit from the competent Dicastery.
Article 15 - Precautionary Measures	Article 16 - Precautionary Measures
If the facts or circumstances so require, the Metropolitan shall propose to the competent Dicastery the adoption of appropriate measures or precautionary measures against the suspect.	If the facts or circumstances so require, the Metropolitan shall propose to the competent Dicastery the adoption of appropriate measures or precautionary measures against the suspect. The Dicastery takes the measures after hearing the Pontifical Representative.
Art. 16 - Establishment of a fund	Article 17 - Establishment of a fund
§1. Ecclesiastical Provinces, Episcopal Conferences, Synods of Bishops and Councils of Hierarchs may establish a fund to support the costs of investigations, established in accordance with canons 116 and 1303 §1, 1° CIC and 1047 CCEO, and administered according to the norms of canon law.	§1. Ecclesiastical Provinces, Episcopal Conferences, Synods of Bishops and Councils of Hierarchs may establish a fund to support the costs of investigations, established in accordance with canons 116 and 1303 §1, 1° CIC and 1047 CCEO, and administered according to the norms of canon law.
§2. At the request of the entrusted Metropolitan, the funds necessary for the purposes of the investigation shall be placed at his disposal by the administrator of the fund, subject to the duty to submit a statement to the latter at the end of the investigation.	§2. At the request of the entrusted Metropolitan, the funds necessary for the purposes of the investigation shall be placed at his disposal by the administrator of the fund, subject to the duty to submit a statement to the latter at the end of the investigation.
Article 17 - Transmission of documents and <i>votum</i>	Article 18 - Transmission of documents and <i>votum</i>
§1. Once the investigation has been completed, the Metropolitan shall transmit the acts to the competent dicastery together with his <i>votum</i> on the results of the investigation and in response to any questions raised in the instructions referred to in Article 10 §2.	§1. Once the investigation has been completed, the Metropolitan transmits the original of the acts to the competent Dicastery together with his <i>votum</i> on the results of the investigation and in response to any questions raised in the instructions referred to in Article 11 §2. A copy of the acts is kept in the Archives of the competent Papal Representative.
§2. Unless later instructed by the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan's faculties cease once the investigation is completed.	§2. Unless later instructed by the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan's faculties cease once the investigation is completed.
§3. In accordance with the instructions of the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan shall, upon request, inform the person who claims to have been offended or <i>his</i> legal representatives of the outcome of the investigation.	§3. In accordance with the instructions of the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan shall, upon request, inform the person who claims to have been offended and, where appropriate, the person who made the report or their legal representatives of the outcome of the investigation.
Art. 18 - Subsequent Measures	Art. 19 - Subsequent Measures

VELM/2019 ¹	VELM/2023 ²
The competent department, unless it decides to order a supplementary investigation, proceeds in accordance with the law as provided for the specific case.	The competent department, unless it decides to order a supplementary investigation, proceeds in accordance with the law as provided for the specific case.
Article 19 - Compliance with State Laws	Article 20 - Compliance with State Laws
These rules 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.	These rules 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.
<i>These rules are approved ad experimentum for a three-year period.</i>	
I decree that this Apostolic Letter in the form of a Motu Proprio be promulgated by publication in L'Osservatore Romano, entering into force on 1 June 2019, and that it then be published in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis.	I decree that this Apostolic Letter in the form of a Motu Proprio be promulgated by publication in L'Osservatore Romano, entering into force on 30 April 2023 , and that it then be published in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis. With its entry into force, the previous Apostolic Letter in the form of a Motu Proprio promulgated on 7 May 2019 is abrogated.
Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, on 7 May 2019, the seventh of the Pontificate.	Given in Rome, at St Peter's, on the 25th day of March in the year 2023, Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the eleventh of the Pontificate.
FRANCIS	FRANCIS

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