Committed to Accountability

THEMES

• The Motu Proprio issued by Pope Francis is a major milestone in the global effort to rid the Church of the evil of sexual abuse and misconduct.

• The Holy Father’s call for new standards of accountability and sunlight will strengthen anti-abuse standards in countries around the world, including new oversight of bishops.

• In the United States, we already have strong protections in place in many areas, such as a zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse, and the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a set of enforceable reforms that have tackled the abuse crisis head on, making the Church a much safer place for the young and vulnerable.

• Building from the reforms of the Charter and emboldened by the Holy Father’s call, we now commit to implementing a new round of reforms that will protect young people and vulnerable adults from abuse at the hands of all clergy, including bishops.

• USCCB’s reform agenda includes elements that closely mirror the Motu Proprio, such as new third-party reporting tools, whistleblower protections and a metropolitan oversight model.

• Lay review boards in every diocese have powerfully impacted our ability to protect children from predators. Therefore, the USCCB encourages each metropolitan to utilize lay professionals in all investigations, building upon a tradition of lay expertise throughout the Church.

• The Global Church will soon see unprecedented protections against abuse. In the United States, we already enjoy many of these protections, and now seek to strengthen them.