With Dignity and Respect: How Victims May Participate in Canonical Proceedings – Reflections on a Seminar by a Practising Canon Lawyer in Penal Matters

Aidan McGrath OFM

Abstract

"With dignity and respect": these words, taken from the Apostolic Letter *Vos estis lux mundi*, sum up this short contribution, which is a personal reflection on three interventions made in the course of an international conference promoted by a working group from the Pontifical Commission for the Safeguarding of Minors. This conference took place in Rome in December 2021 and addressed the topic of the "Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Procedures". The three particular interventions on this issue, on which the author reflects, were rooted in the legislation of the USA, in international law and in canon law. The author is of the view that there is already scope within canon law to allow for the participation of victims in canonical penal proceedings. Nevertheless, it is clear from the interventions at the conference that, in working with victims in this area, the Church has a lot to learn from other jurisdictions.

Keywords: *dignity; respect; listening; participation; learning; child sexual abuse; canonical penal procedures*

1. Introduction

On June 1, 2021, Pope Francis promulgated the revised Book VI of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, entitled "Penal Sanctions in the Church".[1] It came into force on December 8, 2021. The new norms display a major shift with regard to delicts that concern the sexual abuse of minors. Until then, the law saw the sexual abuse of minors within the Church, particularly in relation to clerics, as a violation of the obligation of celibacy. The many cases of allegations of sexual abuse of minors by members of the clergy, as well as by brothers of religious institutes, brought about an awareness that

1 Francis, Apostolic Constitution *Pascite gregem Dei* on the Reform of Book VI of the Code of Canon Law, available on https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2021/06/01/0347/00751.html#DE, May 23, 2021, access 26.08.2022. The revised norms in English translation: https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2021/06/01/210601b.html, access 26.08.2022.

the issue at stake is not simply a violation of celibacy: it is rather a violation of the dignity of the other person, who is used by the perpetrator for his own gratification. The legislator expresses this new perspective by changing the delict itself: whereas the former law listed the delict under the heading "Delicts against special obligations", the new penal law issued in 2021 lists it under the heading "Offences against human life, dignity and liberty". To place the delict under a different heading is more than mere reorganisation. It is a call for a shift in how to interpret the delict itself. However, the revised norms of the new Book VI do not attend to penal procedures.

In December 2021, the Working Group "Safeguarding Guidelines and Norms" of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, hereafter PCPM, conducted a seminar on the "Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Procedures". It was a follow-up from a previous seminar held in 2019 which was entitled "Promoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability". The insights of the latter seminar, as well as findings from a number of nationally conducted independent investigations about the handling of allegations of the sexual abuse of minors in the Catholic Church brought to the fore the need to reflect on the rights of the alleged victims in penal procedures.

The purpose of the 2021 seminar was to consider the current canonical provisions in penal procedures, while listening to criteria that international treaties have developed over the years and to the provisions that different jurisdictions around the world have for the participation of alleged victims in their procedures. This seminar, which was by invitation only, brought together staff members of the relevant dicasteries of the Roman Curia who handle complaints, diocesan bishops who are also canon lawyers, professors of canon law, canon lawyers with practical experience in the area of penal matters on the diocesan level or in religious institutes, acting, for example, as a judge or an investigating judge. I myself am a member of a religious institute and currently the major superior of a province that includes Ireland, Great Britain and Zimbabwe. In this capacity, as well as in my capacity as a canon lawyer, when I was involved in penal cases as the preliminary investigator, the advocate for the accused or the judge, I obtained knowledge about and an awareness of the role and the needs of victims in canonical penal procedures.

My reflections are offered here in the light of the interventions at the seminar and also in the light of my personal experience. I want to highlight a few aspects that struck me particularly during the seminar.

2. The Terminology of Victim

Mary Graw Leary, a professor of law at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC, a former federal prosecutor and recognised expert in the areas of criminal law and procedure as well as victimisation, presented her reflections in the study entitled "Crime Victim Rights Framework in the United States of America".[2] She considers the meaning of the term "victim", which, in the USA, is defined as "a person directly and proximately harmed as a result of the commission of an offence". She is of the view that this very precise definition does not really encompass the extent of the harm caused by a perpetrator of sexual abuse. She notes:

> "Jurisdictions should reject the temptation to conceptualize the victim as only the person directly harmed by the wrongful act. This is particularly true with child abuse as this is a crime that tears at the family framework, having a ripple effect on the immediate family of a victim as well as anyone in relation with her".[3]

The professor admits that it would be impossible to extend the meaning of the term that widely but that it is possible to extend it beyond the individual directly affected.

This is something that I can confirm from an actual case known to me: a victim of a serial offender asked to meet with the offender; he wanted to confront him with all the harm he had caused and the misery and suffering that followed; when he entered the room, accompanied by his wife and by the psychotherapist who facilitated the meeting, the man he saw was not the monster of his nightmares but a small, wizened, very elderly man; he said that he had come to speak of his anger at all he had suffered but that, when he saw him, he changed his mind: "now that I see you, I see that you are a pathetic old man and I am not going to get angry with you; in fact, I feel sorry for you"; no sooner had he finished speaking than his wife directed her gaze at the old man and said very clearly: "he might not be angry with you any longer, but I am – I am angry with you for all that I have had to suffer on account of what you did to him all those years ago; he might be prepared to take pity on you and forgive you, but I never will". Was the wife in this case also a victim? She most certainly was. Is it possible

2 Mary Graw Leary, A Crime Victim Rights Framework in the USA, in Charles J. Scicluna / Myriam Wijlens (eds), Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Proceedings. Provisions in Canon Law and the Criminal Law of Different Legal Systems, Nomos 2023, 119-150.

3 Ibid. 127, 128.

that the wife could have rights within the canonical penal procedures? The answer to that question is negative because canon 1398 refers to actions by the perpetrator that are directed only to the person who is a minor. It does not include others. Nevertheless, even though not a victim in the strict legal sense, the wife in this case must be understood as having suffered as a result of the abuse perpetrated on her husband. While she may not have rights in a penal procedure, the Church has obligations to her from a pastoral point of view.

3. Fundamental Rights

Working within the framework of the more precise definition of "victim", Professor Graw Leary presents and comments on ten fundamental rights found in US legislation concerning victims and their participation in court proceedings:

1) The right to be reasonably protected from the accused.
2) The right to reasonable, accurate and timely notice of any public court proceeding or any parole proceeding involving the crime or any release or escape of the accused.
3) The right not to be excluded from any such public court proceeding, unless the court, after receiving clear and convincing evidence, determines that testimony by the victim would be materially altered if the victim heard other testimony at that proceeding.
4) The right to be reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding.
5) The reasonable right to confer with the attorney for the government in the case.
6) The right to full and timely restitution as provided in law.
7) The right to proceedings free from unreasonable delay.
8) The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim's dignity and privacy.
9) The right to be informed in a timely manner of any plea bargain or deferred prosecution agreement.
10) The right to be informed of rights.

These rights make a great deal of sense and put the victim at the heart of any proceedings in the state courts. Professor Graw Leary, in her conclusion, states:

> "A necessary component of that recognition and reconciliation is the awareness that there is a vital and essential role for victim-survivors in the canonical process that will benefit both the process as well as the victim-survivor herself. The basic rights afforded in the American federal criminal justice system to all victims of crime provide a minimal framework for that important first step".[4]

It is clear that she would like to see something akin to these incorporated into canon law.

It should be noted that many elements of these US procedural rights can and should be part of ecclesiastical proceedings, penal and administrative, without the need to modify the existing law: in particular, those which focus on the innate right of the victim to be treated with fairness and with respect for his or her dignity and privacy. Over the past two decades, a number of reports have been issued on behalf of the state concerning allegations of abuse and how they have been handled in dioceses and other institutions in Ireland. These include the reports into the dioceses of Ferns (2005), Dublin (2009) and Cloyne (2011), the Ryan report into residential institutions (2009) and the McAleese report into Magdalen Homes and Laundries (2013). A key complaint in each of these investigations was that those who had suffered abuse (sexual, physical, emotional and psychological) were not treated with respect when they came forward to make a complaint: they felt ignored, rejected, demeaned and treated as hostile.

Article 5 of the Apostolic Letter *Vos estis lux mundi*, hereafter VELM, already gives some indication of the obligation to treat victims with dignity and respect:

> "§ 1. The ecclesiastical Authorities shall commit themselves to ensuring that those who state that they have been harmed, together with their families, *are to be treated with dignity and respect,* and, in particular, are to be:
>
> a) *welcomed, listened to and supported,* including through provision of specific services;

4 Ibid. 148.

b) offered spiritual assistance;
c) offered medical assistance, including therapeutic and psychological assistance, as required by the specific case.

§ 2. The good name and the privacy of the persons involved, as well as the confidentiality of their personal data, shall be protected".[5]

Of course, it is one thing to have such a duty indicated on paper, even in a letter from the Pope, it is quite another to make sure that it is observed in a real-life setting, and throughout the Church.

The majority of the ten rights identified by Professor Graw Leary are rooted firmly in elements of the system of criminal law that operates within the USA, e.g., parole proceedings, release or escape of the accused, and plea bargains. These, for many reasons, do not have exact parallels in the canonical system: ecclesiastical superiors do not have the authority to restrain, arrest or otherwise constrain members of the clergy and religious figures accused of the sexual abuse of minors. However, the real point at stake for the Church is to become aware of the moral obligation – which would have to be secured in a legally binding manner – to keep the victims informed at all stages of the proceedings, from the preliminary investigation right to the final decision and verdict. The confidential nature of the canonical proceedings should not prevent the proper and rightful sharing of important information with those whose lives have been affected by criminal behavior. A balance between confidentiality and transparency is to be found here. Confidentiality may not mean "secrecy" and transparency may not imply that everything is accessible to all in the public domain. Were the latter the case, the right to privacy of victims might also be affected. If victims cannot be sure that this right is respected, it would not be safe for them to come forward. Hence, discretion must be exercised in the matter of who should have access to information and when, and all this should be guided by the well-being of the victim.[6]

5 Francis, Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*, available on https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190507_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html, access 26.08.2022. Emphasis by the author.

6 On this matter, see the proceedings of the seminar 'Promoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability' organised by the PCPM in 2019 and published in *Periodica* 109 [2020] 401–676; as well as online in an English/Italian translation: https://www.iuscangreg.it/seminario-tutela-minori, access 28.08.2022.

4. Rights Expressed in International Treaties

The seminar organised by the PCPM opened with a presentation on the current canonical provisions by Monsignor Gianpaolo Montini (more below). Before subsequently attending to provisions in different jurisdictions around the world, Professor Fabián Salvioli, an Argentinian human rights lawyer and United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, presented some rights that can be distilled from international treaties.[7] He mentioned that, in his capacity as Special Rapporteur, victims of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church have contacted him.

Before we address this presentation, it is important to distinguish between the Holy See as a subject of international law and the Roman Catholic Church as a faith community. The seminar did not focus on the implications of international treaties that bind the Holy See, but instead focused on the canonical norms within the faith community. Nevertheless, in as far as these treaties articulate rights rooted, for example, in natural law or not against the anthropology of the teaching of the Church, they deserve careful study.

Basing his argumentation firmly on the foundation of international human rights law, Professor Salvioli states that victims have the right to justice, and he indicates some elements that guarantee this right:

- "active participation in the process at all moments and phases;
- a context that is not intimidating, with psychological and legal support provided by persons they choose and trust;
- protection from any form of revictimization of the persons affected – the focus must be on the actions of the perpetrator not on those of the victim;
- full access to the judicial and/or administrative proceedings".[8]

Of particular relevance are the contributions in this volume by Matteo Visioli, Confidenzialità e segreto pontificio, 447–491; Charles J. Scicluna, The Rights of Victims in Canonical Penal Processes, 493–503; John P. Beal, Accountability and Transparency According to Canon and International Law: A Human Rights Perspective, 505–526; and Damián Astigueta, La trasparenza e il diritto di difesa, 527–548.

7 Fabián Salvioli, The Rights of the Victims: International Standards and the Need of a Holistic Approach, in Scicluna / Wijlens (n 2), 39-51.

8 Ibid. 46, 47.

The thoughts presented by Professor Salvioli are not far removed from those of Professor Graw Leary. Much of what he suggests can already be made real, bearing in mind the particular nature of the canonical judicial and administrative penal processes. The right to reparation and compensation is not to be contested. Canon law makes provision for this in canons 1729–1731 of the Code of Canon Law, hereafter CIC. In many countries, however, episcopal conferences or diocesan bishops have agreed to pay an "acknowledgement" of damages incurred because of abuse by a member of the clergy, but this provision is, so to speak, made outside the ecclesiastical courts. Such a provision might be helpful when, for example, the cleric accused of the delict has died. Moreover, in a number of countries, the question of the reparation of damages is settled according to decisions of the state's civil courts and is not under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority.

Given the adversarial nature of a criminal or penal procedure, legal challenges by the accused and his or her legal representatives can create an environment that a victim may find intolerably hostile. The fact that most cases coming before ecclesiastical authorities in Ireland in these years concern matters that happened over 40 years ago, the defence by the accused is often very vigorous and hostile. Another difficulty that limits full participation in a canonical penal process is created by the *General Data Protection Regulator,* hereafter GDPR, a piece of European Union legislation that came into force in May 2018. The GDPR restricts access to personal data. Under the legislation, apart from issues such as law enforcement, an individual's personal data can only be shared with another in limited circumstances. Among these is the situation where the individual freely consents to the sharing of information. In canonical penal procedures, this has become another bone of contention: the full access by a victim to judicial or administrative canonical proceedings by analogy with US legislation and international treaties cannot be granted without taking GDPR into consideration. The documentation of a particular case can often contain very delicate and deeply personal information about the person accused. The ecclesiastical authorities are not competent to allow access to this material without the individual's consent because, unlike the State law enforcement services, they are not exempt from the norm of the GDPR. This is an issue that is being strongly upheld by advocates acting on behalf of clerics and religious figures accused of sexual abuse of minors.

5. Current Canonical Insights

The seminar began its deliberations by listening to Monsignor Gianpaolo Montini, a professor of canon law at the Gregorian University and a former senior official of the Apostolic Signatura. His task was to present the current canonical provisions with regard to the rights of the victims. From a strictly canonical standpoint, Monsignor Montini also echoes some of what Professor Graw Leary makes explicit. He argues very clearly and very forcibly that victims can already be parties in canonical penal proceedings, participating as an injured party in a claim for the reparation of damages under Canon 1729 § 1 CIC, in accordance with Canon 1596, which regulates the intervention of third parties in a case. If admitted by the judge, the victim becomes truly a party in the case. In a truly erudite presentation, Monsignor Montini then states:

> "Allowing the victim to intervene in the penal process entails, as a logical procedural consequence, that the victim benefits from all the rights of the "party" to a trial; it can be mentioned in this regard, for example, that the victim has the right to:
>
> – know the accusations and evidence disputed in the summons of the accused (cf. can. 540 SN);[9]
> – establish one or more defenders (lawyers) and a procurator (cf. can. 553, § 1 SN),[10] as well as request free legal aid;
> – propose exceptions and proofs (cf. can. 553, § 1 SN);[11]

9 "The object or matter of criminal trial is determined in the joinder of issue itself, with which the judge during the session of the court on the day assigned in the citation indicates the petition of the promoter of justice to the accused and to the injured parties, if they are present" (can. 540 SN).

10 "The injured party, who has been admitted to the exercise of a contentious action, has the right [...] to choose an advocate or procurator, as a true party in the case, but with due regard for canon 376, § 3" (can. 553, § 1 SN), i.e., in the case of late intervention, which therefore obviously takes place according to the Acts.

11 "The injured party, who has been admitted to the exercise of a contentious action, has the right to propose exceptions and proofs [...], as a true party in the case, but with due regard for canon 376, § 3" (can. 553, § 1 SN), i.e., in the case of late intervention, which therefore obviously takes place according to the status of the Acts. Cf. also can. 557 SN.

– participate in the discussion of the case (cf. can. 569, § 1 SN);[12]
– request an exemption from legal expenses (cf. can. 576 SN).[13]

In a single word, the victim is "party" of the penal process to all effects, "as a true party in the case", as underlined in can. 553, § 1 SN".[14]

The document he refers to is *Sollicitudinem nostram*, an Apostolic letter by Pope Pius XII in 1950.[15] This contained sections of the Canon Law for the Eastern Churches in full communion with Rome. This remained in force until 1991 when the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, hereafter CCEO, came into force. Notwithstanding the fact that these canonical provisions are not to be found in current canon law and the fact that, at the time they were in force, they applied to the Eastern Churches in full communion with Rome, Monsignor Montini expresses the view that:

"Although the procedural rules of the aforementioned motu proprio *[Sollicitudinem Nostram]* are not formally in force today, they can still be considered binding due to the fact that they emerge as *logical deductions* from the setting of the current canons 1729–1731, canons that *fully* transpose, albeit in abbreviated form (as in the style of the current Code) the setting of the aforementioned motu proprio".[16]

This position appears to find support in canon 1477 § 1 CCEO: "The promoter of justice, the accused and the advocate for the accused, and the injured party mentioned in can. 1483, § 1 and that person's advocate take part in the discussion".

If the injured party and the advocate for that party can take part in the discussion of a case, surely the injured party can also avail of the rights highlighted by Monsignor Montini. There is no equivalent canon

12 "The promoter of justice, the accused and his advocate, the injured party and the party mentioned in can. 554 and their advocates await the discussion" (can. 569, § 1 SN). Cf. also can. 570 SN.

13 "Only private parties can be bound to pay something under the title of judicial expenses, unless they are exempted (from the burden) according to the norm of canons 441–443" (can. 576 SN).

14 Gianpaolo Montini, The Rights of Alleged Victims in Canonical Penal Procedures. Current Penal Procedural Canon Law, in Scicluna / Wijlens (n 2), 27 FN 20.

15 Pius XII, Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio *Sollicitudinem Nostram. De iudiciis pro Ecclesia orientali,* available on https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-xii_motu-proprio_19500106_sollicitudinem-nostram.html, access 28.08.2022.

16 Montini (n 14), 27 FN 17.

in CIC 1983. But it can be argued on the basis of the recourse to parallel places found in canon 17 CIC that the victim in a penal case who has been constituted as a lawfully intervening third party has rights within the canonical penal process.

A more concrete reflection on his analysis of the situation leads quickly to the conclusion that, in practice, things may not be quite as easy as they might seem. For example, in those parts of the world that follow the common law tradition, no canonical process can take place until the state authorities have concluded their own investigations. To proceed canonically before the state has concluded may well be construed as an effort to subvert the course of justice. In accordance with standard procedure in Ireland, for example, all information about alleged sexual abuse of minors must be reported to the statutory authorities, i.e., to the police (An Garda Síochána) and to the child and family agency (Tusla). While they are investigating the matter, in almost all cases, a civil case for damages is initiated by the victims before the state's civil courts.

By the time any canonical procedure can begin, the ecclesiastical authorities generally can have contact with victims only through their legal representative. The idea of a victim taking part in a subsequent canonical procedure would be unthinkable for most: their experience before the state courts often leaves them exhausted; moreover, not infrequently, they feel they have been let down by the Church already and they are not prepared to assist in any investigation or process. In any case, within the current civil structure in Ireland, if damages have been settled by the state courts, it is not possible for victims to seek them again in canonical trials. The temporal goods of the various Church bodies (dioceses and religious institutes) are administered strictly under the supervision of the Charity Regulator. Payment of damages after a purely internal, canonical procedure would not be looked upon favourably and could well result in sanctions by the Regulator. Nonetheless, advocates representing victims ought to suggest that they present the contentious action for damages mentioned in canon 1729 § 1 so that they can be constituted as parties in the procedure.

In practice, most canonical processes are not judicial in nature but administrative. Monsignor Montini points out that: "There are no explicit procedural prescriptions on the participation of the victim in administrative criminal proceedings".[17] Nevertheless, basing himself on the jurisprudence of the Apostolic Signatura, on the opinion of learned authors and

17 Ibid. 30.

on some indications of the opinion of the senior officials of the Dicastery of the Faith, he is of the view that, even in administrative penal processes, victims can be permitted to intervene in ways not dissimilar from those outlined for the judicial penal process.

6. Looking Ahead

In the light of these and other contributions, how can victims be involved in canonical penal processes in a realistic and meaningful way? To begin to answer that question, might I suggest that, when a canonical penal proceeding – judicial or administrative – has been established:

- those charged with the conduct of the proceedings should reach out, personally or through a person with the appropriate skills, to the victims, to those against whom a delict is said to have been committed;
- they should explain what the proceeding is and how it will unfold;
- they should explain precisely what rights the victim has in the procedure; at present, this is the right to file a complaint, to be heard, to give a statement and to recount the facts of what happened; this gives the victim the status of a witness in a case, but it does not prevent the ecclesiastical authorities from keeping the victim informed;
- they should indicate to the victim someone who is an expert in canonical penal matters who can give information as and when it is necessary; in particular, this expert – who may also act as an advocate – ought to bring to the attention of the victim the possibility of presenting a contentious action for damages in order to become a party in the case;
- they should explain what is happening at every stage of the procedure: at the preliminary investigation, at the joinder of the issue (concordatio dubii), during the instruction, at the phase of deliberation, during a possible appeal and during the implementation of the decision;
- they should seek to have the victim "present" for the final consideration of the judge/judges, not in person, but by means of a victim-impact statement, so that those making the decision might be fully informed of the effects of the crime on the victim; this would give an expression to the damage caused by the violation of the dignity of the victim (cf. canon 1398).

As yet, none of these is the object of an explicit right on the part of a victim according to canon law. However, bearing in mind the need for

confidentiality and the particular nature of canonical proceedings, they are not forbidden: all penal proceedings touch on the common good and this must include the good of the victims. Moreover, as Monsignor Montini has shown, a careful analysis of canonical texts can provide proper justification for behaving in this way.

I have already noted that, in recent decades, the Catholic Church's approach to the sexual abuse of children by clerics and religious figures has undergone a fundamental shift: whereas previously the offence was considered to be a personal failing on the part of the perpetrator, according to the revised Book VI of the Code of Canon Law, it is now to be considered – first and foremost – as an offence against human life, dignity and liberty. The victim, according to the letter of the law, now stands at the centre of the delict. It is time to adopt this perspective for canonical penal procedures as well.

In the light of the contributions made during this conference, it is clear that the Church has a lot to learn from the approach taken in other jurisdictions.

Biography

Aidan McGrath OFM is the Minister Provincial of the Franciscan Province of Ireland. He received his doctorate in canon law in 1985. From 1984–2009, he was successively judge, vice-officialis and judicial vicar of the Dublin Regional Marriage Tribunal and the Dublin Metropolitan Tribunal. From 2009–2017, he was Secretary General of the Order of Friars Minor. He is a canonical consultor to many bishops and religious institutes. He has written several articles on canonical matters. He has over thirty years' experience of penal proceedings in the Church, working as an advocate for the accused, as a preliminary investigator, as a presiding judge and a judge delegate.

References

Astigueta, Damián (2020): La trasparenza e il diritto di difesa, in *P*romoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability, *Periodica* 109, 527–548.

Beal, John P. (2020): Accountability and Transparency According to Canon and International Law: A Human Rights Perspective, in Promoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability, *Periodica* 109, 505–526.

Code of Canon Law 1983.

Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches 1990.

Francis (2021): Apostolic Constitution *Pascite gregem Dei on the Reform of Book VI of the Code of Canon Law*, May 23, 2021, https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2021/06/01/0347/00751.html#DE.

Francis (2019): Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi*, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190507_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html.

Graw Leary, Mary (2023): A Crime Victim Rights Framework in the USA, in Scicluna, Charles J. / Wijlens, Myriam (eds), Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Proceedings. Provisions in Canon Law and the Criminal Law of Different Legal Systems, Nomos, 119-150.

Montini, Gianpaolo (2023): The Rights of Alleged Victims in Canonical Penal Procedures. Current Penal Procedural Canon Law, in Scicluna, Charles J. / Wijlens, Myriam (eds), Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Proceedings. Provisions in Canon Law and the Criminal Law of Different Legal Systems, Nomos, 19-38.

Pius XII (1950): Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio *Sollicitudinem Nostram. De iudiciis pro Ecclesia orientali*, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-xii_motu-proprio_19500106_sollicitudinem-nostram.html.

Salvioli, Fabián (2023): The Rights of the Victims: International Standards and the Need of a Holistic Approach, in Scicluna, Charles J. / Wijlens, Myriam (eds), Rights of Alleged Victims in Penal Proceedings. Provisions in Canon Law and the Criminal Law of Different Legal Systems, Nomos, 39-51.

Scicluna, Charles J. (2020): The Rights of Victims in Canonical Penal Processes, in Promoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability, *Periodica* 109, 493–503.

Visioli, Matteo (2020): Confidenzialità e segreto pontificio, in Promoting and Protecting the Dignity of Persons in Allegations of Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults: Balancing Confidentiality, Transparency and Accountability, *Periodica* 109, 447–491.