



# NEWS RELEASE

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **National service for reporting sexual abuse by bishops launched** *Independent system brings greater accountability to bishops*

SACRAMENTO – Effective today, a third-party system for reporting sexual abuse or the mishandling of such cases by U.S. bishops is in place and ready to provide a venue for those seeking justice.

The Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service, or CBAR, comes in response to May 2019 directives issued by Pope Francis in his apostolic letter, *Vos estis lux mundi* (“You are the light of the world”). In this letter, Pope Francis called for a means to address reports of bishop misconduct, and U.S. bishops approved the implementation of the CBAR the following month.

Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto participated in developing the CBAR system and describes it as an important step toward accountability in the Church.

“Responsibility for the safety of our young and vulnerable begins with the bishop. Establishing a strong, independent system to hold bishops accountable is an essential part of our commitment to children and their families,” Bishop Soto said. “Since 2002 we have continually strengthened our reporting of and response to sexual abuse by priests. With this step, bishops are included in a similar process of responsibility and accountability.”

The CBAR service is operated by an independent, third-party entity that provides intake services through a secure, confidential, and professional platform. Once a report is received, it is forwarded to the “Metropolitan” archbishop and a designated lay person in each region, who is responsible for reviewing the report. The Metropolitan is part of a process involving the Vatican to investigate the alleged abuse or misconduct and determine what actions to take in response to it. For the Diocese of Sacramento, the “Metropolitan” is Archbishop Salvatore Joseph Cordileone of the San Francisco Archdiocese.

The third-party system allows individuals to report a U.S. Catholic bishop who has committed an act of sexual abuse himself or who has interfered with a civil or church investigation into allegations of sexual abuse by another cleric. This system is *in addition to* the existing protective measures and reporting systems for complaints against priests or other diocesan employees. It is designed to respond only to complaints against bishops for issues related to sexual misconduct.

Individuals may go to [ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://ReportBishopAbuse.org) in order to make a report. Reports are also accepted via (800) 276-1562.

To report sexual abuse or misconduct by a priest or anyone in diocesan ministry who is not a bishop, call (866) 777-9133 or visit [www.scd.org/safe-environment](http://www.scd.org/safe-environment).

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