



Recommendations for USCCB June Assembly

With the recently released *motu proprio*, “*Vos estis lux mundi*”, Pope Francis has lit a candle of hope among Catholics that the current crises of abuse and leadership failures will be addressed. During the USCCB June General Assembly next week, the bishops have the opportunity to share that light and illuminate a path forward for the Church in the United States.

Catholics are looking for the bishops to find a way to meet the goals of the *motu proprio* and even exceed them for the good of our children, vulnerable adults, and the broader Church. We look forward to the necessary conversion that will lead a new culture of responding to abuse and a new culture of leadership, one that is based on greater accountability, transparency, and co-responsibility.

Leadership Roundtable hopes that the bishops gathered for the USCCB June General Assembly will:

1. Publicly and collectively acknowledge the leadership failure and cover-up
2. Fully enact the *motu proprio*, as a minimum response, in a timely fashion
3. Pass the [proposals](#) to which Cardinal DiNardo referred after November’s General Assembly (some of which are also reflected in the *motu proprio*):
 - a. “Standards of Accountability for Bishops”
 - b. “Process for investigating complaints against bishops reported through a [national] third-party compliance hotline... [by] relying upon the established diocesan review boards, with their lay expertise, to be overseen by the metropolitan or senior suffragan”
 - c. “Protocol for Removed Bishops”
 - d. “National guidelines for the publication of lists of names of those clerics facing substantiated claims of abuse”
 - e. “The fair and timely completion of the various investigations into the situation surrounding Archbishop McCarrick and publication of their results”
4. Ensure that the above elements are supported by clearly defined national definitions and standards regarding the:
 - a. role and responsibility of diocesan review boards, including the role of laity
 - b. recording and retention of records
 - c. investigation and reporting of results to the public
 - d. periodic and independent reviews of files for allegations or red flags

- e. strengthening of the audit process at the parish and diocesan level that will not be self-reporting and will create consequences for non-compliance
 - f. proactive cooperation with external, civil authorities on investigations, reports, and statutes of limitations
 - g. location and supervision of abusers
 - h. modification of canon law to address local realities and to include a list of punishments for clearly defined crimes (whether abuse of a minor, abuse of a vulnerable adult, cover-up, or negligence of duty)
 - i. transparency of finances related to all aspects of the crises
5. Commit to creating a new culture of leadership where laity and clergy are co-responsible and new governance structures are put in place to facilitate greater synodality
 6. Commit to conducting an objective study of root causes to ensure the Church addresses the culture and foundational issues of the crises, not just their symptoms; commission research to update the John Jay study to reflect the most recent data

While the proposals for the USCCB June General Assembly have not been shared for public consultation, based on our analysis of the November proposals and the *motu proprio*, Leadership Roundtable is hopeful that the above elements will be passed and implemented. However, we know that trust will not be fully restored until Church leaders create a new culture of leadership so that the current culture that led to the abuse and leadership crises will never occur again. Recommendations for building a new culture of leadership can be found in our report, [Heal the Body of Christ](#), available on our website at leadershiproundtable.org/crisis.

Leadership Roundtable and lay Catholic leaders have demonstrated readiness to provide expertise and resources in partnership with bishops to ensure a new culture of leadership brings recovery and reform to the Church.