



**LEADERSHIP
ROUNDTABLE**
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Frameworks for Responding to the Crisis and Restoring Trust in Dioceses

The Catholic Church in the United States is facing a dual crisis: a crisis of abuse and a crisis of trust due to the leadership and management practices that covered up the abuse. Below are some high-level frameworks to help diocesan leaders think about how to respond to the crisis and restore trust. These are illustrative of Leadership Roundtable's extensive work in this area and are available in greater detail for diocesan implementation.

Key Principles

When Catholic leaders address the abuse crisis, the principles upon which their actions should be based must be: mission-focused, transparent, accountable, competent, and grounded in justice, in order to restore trust.

Immediate Responses

The best pastoral leaders have a consistent pattern in how they talk about the abuse crisis.

- Pastoral: compassionate, other-focused, so that people "See the face of Christ"
- Personal: authentic, visceral, and with boundaries
- Institutional: clear statements; begin policy, procedures, and systems-change

Long-Term Responses

There should be consideration given to responses, both immediate, mid- and long-term. Additionally, the crisis is multi-generational. This crisis will impact the Catholic Church in the United States across at least three generations: those who directly experienced the abuse crisis, those who did not directly experience the crisis, but were impacted by it, and those who did not directly experience the crisis.

Perspectives for Moving Forward

- Recognize that we cannot stay as we are.
- Keep realistic expectations for progress and know that ministry for the current generation will continue to be impacted.
- Remember that both external and internal accountabilities are necessary.
- Make intentional choices around cultures of leadership, formation, and management.
- Create a vision and action plan that moves towards restoring trust.
- Focus on what unifies us.

Create a Roadmap

- Assess the situation
- Name your frames of reference and guiding principles
- State your vision, “What will we look like and sound like in two to three years?”
- Choose only three to four priorities to work on at a time, keep it simple
- Make it an adaptive Roadmap, versus a static plan
- Communicate your Roadmap: be clear, clarify, over communicate
- Be specific about what needs to change. For example: performance evaluation for clergy and laity, the role of consultative bodies, or the operations of the clergy assignment board
- Measure your progress with quantifiable data

Elements of a Roadmap

When creating a Roadmap (a plan that allows for continuous learning and adaptation), it is helpful to consider the following three elements:

1. Strategy: desired end state, major compass points, boundaries
2. Organization: How to organize the right people to get us to the desired end point
3. Implementation: Who is doing what, when, and measuring progress

The Pace of Recovery

The pace of recovery will be influenced by the degree to which the Catholics in the diocese experience a Church that is:

- supporting survivors,
- being proactive and mission-focused,
- led by people who are competent, healthy, and holy,
- transforming its management and leadership culture towards best practices, and
- restoring trust.

Key Indicators of Systemic Diocesan Change

As progress is made, there is measurable increase in the quality of ministry, for the sake of the mission.

- Use of a Roadmap
- Prioritization
- Internal alignment and coordination
- Mission-focused and competent fiscal management and budgeting
- Highly effective executive level leadership team
- Ongoing leadership formation and development
- Effective consultative structures, using discernment for matters of importance
- Ongoing evaluation for programs, services, and administration
- Robust performance management for both ordained and lay leaders
- Effective means for communication
- Diocesan leaders are one again focus outward, on *missio*

*Excerpted from Leadership Roundtable Diocesan Services and Resources.
For more information about this document or other resources for best practices
in church management and leadership, visit leadershiproundtable.org,
email info@leadershiproundtable.org, or call 202.635.5820.*