



**LEADERSHIP
ROUNDTABLE**
Service. Excellence. Church Management.

Recommendations to Respond to the Twin Crises in the Catholic Church in the United States

November 2018

Process

On October 23, 2018 a group of bishops, along with lay and ordained experts, met in Minneapolis to discuss the twin crises in the Catholic Church in the United States and how leaders might respond. The day included a facilitated process that brought together a range of Catholic leaders, both lay and ordained, to draw upon the depth of expertise in the Church, advance a model of co-responsibility, and create recommendations that could benefit the local and national level. The outcome of this gathering includes the following recommendations, as well as a leadership model for the Church of clergy-lay collaboration as a way forward.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were utilized by the group as they worked on their recommendations. The recommendations should:

- impact the Catholic Church in the United States,
- be based on five principles: transparency, accountability, competency, justice, and trust,
- impact the leadership and management culture of the Church, in line with Catholic beliefs, ecclesiology, and canon law,
- restore trust in the Church based on measurable, visible outcomes,
- engage both ordained and lay Catholics, working together for the mission,
- lean forward, not dwell in the past;
- be realistic and able to be translated into practical strategy, organization, and implementation.

Focus Areas

Over the course of the gathering, three focus areas emerged to help Catholic leaders prioritize what needs to be addressed:

1. Transparency about past and current abuse
2. Structures for bishop accountability and co-responsibility
3. Leadership failures and management practices

Concepts Underpinning the Recommendations

These concepts capture the heart of the conversation in Minneapolis and are the foundation from which the following recommendations flow.

Participants recognized that the Catholic Church in the United States:

- is experiencing a twin crisis: the sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults, as well as leadership failures that have led to distrust,
- the two crises are interrelated for the sexual abuse crisis resulted from a set of leadership and management practices that permitted, than covered up the abuse,
- must place the victims/survivors first in all areas of responding to the crisis,
- needs radical transparency, radical accountability, and lay-clergy co-responsibility; this is not a time for “business as usual”,
- needs clearly articulated and established leadership roles for lay and clergy that provide accountability and co-responsibility,
- must delineate the scope of the problem and operate out of clear definitions to have a common understanding of the crisis and its solutions,
- must thoroughly identify and address the root causes of the egregious leadership failures and cover-up,
- needs consistent, transparent communication from every level, including the Vatican, the USCCB, and dioceses, and
- must rebuild trust through an intentional and systematic process that leads to long-term transformational change.

Focus Areas	Recommendations		
	Immediate November-December 2018	Medium-Term January-June 2019	Long-Term Post-June 2019
Initiatives that encompass all three focus areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a comprehensive statement from bishops about the crisis ● Commit to a framework for action with appropriate structures to address the multi-layered crisis ● Provide consistent, coordinated, transparent communication at all levels - parish, diocesan, USCCB, and Vatican 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch committees and task forces with proper authority for addressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Healing ○ Investigation ○ Transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct objective, systematic study of root causes of the crisis to ensure the Church is addressing foundational issues and not just their symptoms ● Revise seminary curriculum to equip priests with skills in pastoral management, shared leadership, abuse protection, transparency, accountability, and human formation

<p>Transparency about Past and Current Abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a coordinated path for healing (first survivors and families, as well as parish communities and pastoral leaders) ● Meet with and listen to survivors ● Hold listening sessions ● Create plan for coordinated¹ release of names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a handbook of essential resources, research, and definitions related to the sexual abuse crisis ● Develop best practice protocols for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ independent review of files of allegations ○ definitions of credibly accused, other major terms ○ release of names of all credibly accused ○ standards for what a comprehensive, audit process entails ○ proactive agreements to cooperate with external, civil authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a national registry of priests - a database that lists priests in good standing and contact for inquiry for others, include diocesan and religious order priests ● Provide ongoing training and support for pastoral leaders, both laity and clergy
<p>Structures for Bishop Accountability and Co-Responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define the role and responsibility of diocesan review boards ● Revise the Charter to hold bishops equally accountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institute national or regional bodies for bishop accountability ● Consider a regional review board model that would allow multiple dioceses to come together, when necessary, to ensure a wide cross-section of expertise and consistency of practice ● Develop an effective whistleblower policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Codify co-responsibility of lay and ordained in Church leadership and management ● Recognizing the culture shift inherent in adopting co-responsibility, provide clear structures and training ● Create structures for bishops to receive the support and expertise of laity ● Modify the bishops selection process to include transparency and lay involvement
<p>Leadership Failure and Management Practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge publicly and collectively the leadership failure and cover-up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define clericalism, its root causes, and the various forms it takes, ● Consider how seminary culture and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a national standard and best practices for entrance to seminaries

¹ Rationale is to minimize re-traumatization of victims with multiple releases of names. Ideally this would be one national release, but more likely coordinated by state and region

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and communicate a path of repentance beyond prayer 	<p>curriculum contribute to a culture of clericalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing leadership and management training for all pastoral leaders, including lay ministers, seminarians, deacons, priests, and bishops • Establish healthy and consistent evaluation mechanisms (e.g. 360-degree review) for all Church leaders
--	--	--	--

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.