



## LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

Service. Excellence. Church Management.

For Immediate Release  
November 10, 2018

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### Leadership Roundtable: “Bishops called to respond to sexual abuse and leadership crises”

Leadership Roundtable Statement on the USCCB Fall General Assembly

Catholics in the United States are looking for solutions to the twin crises: a crisis of sexual abuse and a crisis of leadership and management failures that covered up the abuse. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will gather at its Fall General Assembly this week to respond to these crises.

The bishops must make a choice: they can opt for a culture of clericalism or commit to a culture of Christ in their leadership and management. A culture of clericalism puts clergy first. A culture of Christ heals the wounded, protects the vulnerable, and promotes the wellbeing of God’s people by welcoming co-responsibility, shared leadership, and good management.

The USCCB Fall General Assembly (Nov. 12-14) is the time to make this choice. Our bishops cannot wait any longer. Catholics want transparency and accountability that permeates the culture of leadership and management to prevent future crises.

Leadership Roundtable is grateful for the bishops’ initial proposals that call for developing standards of episcopal conduct, creating a lay-led commission to address allegations against bishops, and enacting protocols for bishops who are removed or resigned. We also urge the bishops to commit to the following actions, with significant partnership of the laity:

- Conduct an objective, systematic study of the root causes of the crises to ensure the Church is addressing the foundational issues of the crises, not just the symptoms;
- Create a plan for a coordinated release of the names of credibly accused diocesan and religious clergy, with specific standards for a more rigorous and comprehensive audit process that would occur in each diocese;
- Modify the bishop selection process to include transparency and lay involvement,
- Develop a national registry of priests that lists those in good standing and contact for inquiry of others, including diocesan and religious order clergy; and,
- Communicate with Catholics consistently and transparently with regards to the crises.

Leadership Roundtable was initiated by clergy, religious, and laity in the wake of the 2002 sexual abuse crisis to promote best practices in Church management and leadership in the Catholic Church in the United States. At this critical time in our Church’s history, we continue to offer our support and partnership to all Church leaders, both lay and ordained, to resolve these crises.

As the Assembly begins, we are counting on the bishops not only to address the problem of sexual abuse, but also the root causes which include the management and leadership culture. Lay Catholics are ready for this change and eager for increased co-responsibility. As lay, religious, and ordained Catholics, we recognize that these crises affect us all and thus each of us needs to be part of the solution.

May our bishops respond by committing themselves to a transformed leadership culture, one that is grounded in Christ.

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*Leadership Roundtable promotes best practices and accountability in the management, finances, communications, and human resources development of the Catholic Church in the U.S., including greater incorporation of the expertise of the laity.*

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