



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



**DIOCESE**  
*of*  
**AUSTIN**

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 20, 2022

**Diocese of Austin Contact:** Camille Garcia  
(512) 949-2456 - office | (512) 713-4262 - cell

**Leadership Roundtable Contact:** Kate Alexander  
(717) 404-2432 (cell) | [kate@leadershiproundtable.org](mailto:kate@leadershiproundtable.org)

## Leadership Roundtable expands Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative with new cohort in Austin

**WASHINGTON, D.C. / AUSTIN, Texas.** — Leadership Roundtable continues to expand its formation program for Hispanic/Latino leaders, adding a third cohort to the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative in the Diocese of Austin, Texas.

The Austin cohort took part in a sending forth ceremony at St. Mary Cathedral in November 2021 and officially began its work with Leadership Roundtable on January 15. The Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative typically works intensively with leaders for about 10 months.

“In order to advance the mission of Christ in our local church, we must prepare future leaders by providing formational development. Opportunities to learn, engage, and dialogue with others enables us to form disciples for our Church,” said The Most Rev. Joe S. Vásquez, bishop of the Diocese of Austin. “I am grateful to those who have responded to this call to serve, and I deeply appreciate Leadership Roundtable for selecting our diocese as a cohort of the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative.”

Formed in response to a growing need for formation of Hispanic/Latino leaders in the U.S. Church, Leadership Roundtable created the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative to provide leadership development to Hispanic/Latino leaders in Catholic dioceses across the United States, equipping them with the tools and capacity to serve in leadership roles. With the addition of the cohort in Austin, more than 70 leaders have participated in the program since its launch in January 2021.

“Across the board, participants in the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative have found the program transformative for their leadership — giving them more confidence and skills as leaders,” said Michael Brough, executive partner at Leadership Roundtable. “There has been a historic lack of investment in leadership formation for Hispanic/Latino leaders and the Initiative is working to

change that dynamic.”

The Initiative both seeks to support Hispanic/Latino leaders and to promote a new culture of co-responsible leadership to better serve the Catholic Church in the United States.

“For too long, the Church has not benefited from the leadership talents of Hispanics/Latinos,” said Fr. Juan Molina, president and CEO of the Mexican American Catholic College and member of the National Advisory Board of the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative. “For the Church to continue to grow and evangelize, it is vital that our Church continue the work begun with the V Encuentro to form leaders from the Hispanic/Latino community and welcome them to the leadership tables. Leadership Roundtable’s Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative is a unique program offering this kind of formation for Hispanic/Latino leaders and those of us on its National Advisory Committee are eager to see it continue to grow.”

Leadership Roundtable found through its work that the major issues facing pastoral leaders are even more pronounced for Hispanic/Latino leaders and the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative works to close that gap so all leaders are equipped for their ministerial roles.

Leadership Roundtable chose the Diocese of Austin as its third cohort from more than a dozen applicants. The national Advisory Committee of the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative, along with Leadership Roundtable staff, reviewed applications submitted by dioceses across the nation, selecting to work with Austin because of its recognition and commitment to supporting Hispanic/Latino leadership. The diocese has supported the formation of emerging leaders through the accompaniment of Bishop Joe S. Vásquez after participating in the V Encuentro process, as well as through new Hispanic/Latino diocesan initiatives involving young Hispanics/Latinos in the Pastoral Juvenil Hispana.

Leadership Roundtable launched the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative with support from a \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Thriving in Ministry initiative and with support from other donors. With Thriving in Ministry, Lilly Endowment is encouraging various religious organizations across the nation to create or strengthen programs that help pastoral leaders build relationships with experienced colleagues and guide them through key leadership challenges in parish ministry. Lilly Endowment has provided nearly \$70 million in grants to 78 organizations through Thriving in Ministry.

###

*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.*

**Diocese of Austin** The Roman Catholic Diocese of Austin includes 127 parishes, or faith communities, in 25 counties in Central Texas. Bishop Joe S. Vásquez leads the diocese, which stretches over 21,000 square miles. More than

620,000 Catholics live in the diocese. For more information on the Diocese of Austin [click here](#).

**Lilly Endowment Inc.** is an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J. K. Lilly and his sons, Eli and J.K. Jr., through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, the Endowment is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with its founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education, and religion, and it maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.

For more information about Leadership Roundtable and the Latino Pastoral Leaders Initiative, visit [leadershiproundtable.org/latino-pastoral-leaders-initiative/](http://leadershiproundtable.org/latino-pastoral-leaders-initiative/)