



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

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 26, 2022

CONTACT: Kate Alexander  
Senior Communications Manage

## **U.S. Catholic leaders respond to Synod synthesis, develop recommendations for synodal leadership**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Catholic leaders from across the U.S. enthusiastically responded to the release of the initial synthesis of the global synod process last week, developing recommendations that would help the leadership of the Church move toward more synodal ways of leading.

Gathered together at Leadership Roundtable's Catholic Partnership Summit, more than 230 leaders from national organizations and 50 dioceses across the U.S. identified actions needed in the Church including formation in synodal leadership — defined by characteristics such as listening, discernment, collaboration, co-responsibility, transparency, and accountability.

In a live-streamed presentation from Frascati, Italy, where he convened with 35 individuals to begin the continental phase of the Synod, Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary general of the Synod of Bishops, told the assembly in D.C. that early Synod reports from across the world have been “astonishing.”

“As a matter of fact, we almost received a reply from all bishops’ conferences in the world, something which is unprecedented in history,” he said. “And this shows that the Holy Father, when he is addressing synodality, is really touching an important core in the people of God. I hope that with my reflection, and also listening to you and trying to address your queries, I will help you to sustain this enthusiasm towards a synodal Church.”

Held in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 22 and 23, the Catholic Partnership Summit focused on a theme of **Living Synodal Leadership: Our Call to a Unified Church**.

“In preparing the Summit, we sensed early on that the call to become a synodal Church and the ongoing Synod process were going to further encourage adjustments and challenge some of the current leadership culture in our Church,” said Patrick Markey, managing partner of Leadership Roundtable.

Hosted by Leadership Roundtable, the Summit was the first formal gathering of leaders following the release of the synthesis report on the diocesan phase of the global Synod in the U.S. by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“As we were frequently reminded during the Summit, the Holy Spirit leads our synodal work as a Church. We took care to welcome the Spirit into our conversations through periods of silence and through an openness from every participant,” said Kim Smolik, an executive partner at Leadership Roundtable. “We are humbled by the work that took place during the Summit.”

In addition to formation in synodal leadership, attendees also addressed expanding leadership roles for women, and seeking reconciliation with those who have been wounded or excluded by the Church.

Among those who attended the full Summit was Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Pierre joined both days with leaders in attendance in roundtable discussions and in developing recommendations in four key areas of synodal leadership: Our Synodal Roadmap, Being One Church, The Vital Role of Women’s Leadership in the Church, and Emerging Models of Leadership and Faith in Practice.

Elizabeth McCaul, board co-chair of Leadership Roundtable, noted that this year’s Summit built upon work done in recent years, saying: “The Summit continued its history of facilitating critical conversations among leaders to promote best practices of leadership and, in keeping with the results of the Synod report, fostering a co-responsible, accountable culture in the Church.”

During the Summit, speakers challenged attendees to better understand synodality and how it should inform the way they lead. They offered examples of synodal leadership in practice and ideas for actions or changes to spur discussion.

“Since our Catholic Partnership Summit in 2019, attendees have annually recommended actions to create a new leadership culture,” said Michael Brough, an executive partner at Leadership Roundtable. “The global Synod process and the U.S. synthesis released last week have heightened the urgency for action.”

As an organization, Leadership Roundtable committed to those who attended the Summit that it would continue supporting the ongoing Synod process, now in the continental phase. Leadership Roundtable collaborated with Vatican and U.S. leaders of the Synod to develop foundational materials used globally to facilitate and report on the diocesan phase of the Synod.

Leadership Roundtable also announced that it commits to work in partnership with other organizations to create a formation program in synodal leadership that would offer training and support to grow competency as leaders. Leadership Roundtable will also continue its work to regularly convene Catholic leaders at the parish, diocesan, and national levels.

Leadership Roundtable will release a formal report on the Summit, detailing the recommendations for action, in the coming months.

###

*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.*

**To learn more about the Summit visit: [summit.leadershiproundtable.org](http://summit.leadershiproundtable.org)**