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U.S. Catholic Leaders to gather in D.C. to discuss synodal leadership, unity

WASHINGTON, D.C.— As part of the ongoing global Synod process, more than 200 U.S. Catholic Church leaders will gather in Washington, D.C. next week from Sept. 22-23 to discuss how to more fully incorporate synodality into Church leadership structures and culture.

Known as the Catholic Partnership Summit, the two-day, special invitation gathering responds to the synodal shift within the Church started by Pope Francis, and is hosted by Leadership Roundtable, a U.S.-based Catholic nonprofit that seeks to promote best practices in leadership and management within the Church.

“Pope Francis has set a bold vision for the Church by asking it to become synodal — a Church that listens to all voices and experiences to discern the direction of the Spirit,” said Kim Smolik, an executive partner at Leadership Roundtable. “As leaders, we are called to carry out that vision and that requires us to embrace new, agile ways of leading.”

The core focus of the Summit is to facilitate dialogue as to how Catholic leaders respond to Pope Francis’ call to synodality. Discussions will focus on a theme of Living Synodal Leadership: Our Call to a Unified Church, specifically considering topics like the roles of women’s leadership and of emerging models of faith in practice.

“Synodality is how we live out our call to leadership through service and engage in co-responsible decision-making as leaders,” said Kerry Robinson, an executive partner at Leadership Roundtable. “It is a willingness to answer the call of the Holy Spirit and, when practiced, offers hope, requires courage, and builds unity and trust.”

Leaders at the Summit will also address the ongoing divisions among Catholics and discuss and propose ways leaders can help bridge divides and promote unity within faith communities.

“Synodality is a way of being Church in which we not only listen to each other, but we are conscious that we are called together to walk the same path that has been marked off for us by the

Holy Spirit,” said Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, CSsR, Archbishop of Newark and a co-host of the Summit. “It’s not simply collecting opinions, but it’s an invitation to discover a more profound unity.”

Scheduled to kick off the Summit is a keynote from Cardinal Mario Grech, the general secretary for the Synod of Bishops. He will present live from Rome about the global Synod process and take questions from those in attendance – a mix of leaders ranging from U.S. cardinals, bishops, diocesan lay leaders, and corporate professionals, to canon lawyers, theologians, philanthropists, religious brothers and sisters, Catholic nonprofit leaders, priests, and young adults.

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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.*

To learn more about the Summit visit: summit.leadershiproundtable.org