



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

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Next Steps for U.S. Bishops and Laity after Vatican Abuse Meeting

As bishops from around the world conclude the Vatican meeting on abuse, Leadership Roundtable affirms the long-needed steps taken at the global meeting to listen to the experience of abuse survivors and to hear from lay experts. Vatican leadership recognized the importance of building the whole meeting around the root causes of the leadership failure, including clericalism, and began to look at the crucial topics of accountability, responsibility, and transparency.

“Now, Leadership Roundtable calls upon the United States bishops to take swift and bold action to go beyond abuse prevention measures and include a focus on bishop accountability as a critical part of a new culture of leadership,” says Kim Smolik, Leadership Roundtable CEO. “This necessary culture change will only succeed if clergy and laity together address the root causes of the twin crises of abuse and leadership failures to bring about recovery and reform.”

At the Vatican meeting, Pope Francis noted, “It is difficult to grasp the phenomenon of the sexual abuse of minors without considering power, since it is always the result of an abuse of power.” To address those abuses, he implored the world’s bishops to take “concrete and effective measures” through their episcopal conferences to respond to the scourge of abuse and cover-up.

As President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Cardinal Daniel DiNardo noted that during the Vatican meeting there were calls for “a code of conduct for bishops, the need to establish specific protocols for handling accusations against bishops, user-friendly reporting mechanisms, and the essential role transparency must play in the healing process.”

Leadership Roundtable agrees with Cardinal DiNardo that “achieving these goals will require the active involvement and collaboration of the laity.”

Leadership Roundtable will continue to work collaboratively with over 50 dioceses since the abuse crisis re-erupted last summer. We will continue to equip Church leaders with proposals that could be immediately implemented, as well as additional ones that could be finalized and approved at the USCCB’s June 2019 General Assembly. These proposals derive from Leadership Roundtable’s Catholic Partnership Summit that was held February 1–2, 2019 in Washington, DC. More than 200 lay, religious, and ordained Catholic leaders and experts participated in the Summit which resulted in a robust set of actionable recommendations for co-responsibility, accountability, and transparency, that will be shared with the U.S. bishops and laity later this week.

“The crises of abuse and leadership failures has affected each of us—laity, religious, and ordained,” says Smolik, “and it is up to us to urgently work together to reform Church leadership and heal the body of 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.

For more information about Leadership Roundtable, visit www.leadershiproundtable.org