



National Leadership Roundtable
on Church Management

PRESS RELEASE

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Leadership Roundtable offers “a blueprint for responsibility” at annual meeting

PHILADELPHIA--The Catholic Church in the US was beginning to make significant strides in addressing the sexual abuse crisis when Catholic institutions were faced with another daunting obstacle: the global financial meltdown. Both subjects were topics of discussion at the recent annual meeting of the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management at the Wharton School, where over 100 business and Church leaders gathered to find collaborative solutions to these challenges.

The Most Rev. Blase Cupich, bishop of Rapid City and bishop-elect of Spokane, spoke via Skype as part of a panel that highlighted the American response to the sex abuse scandal. He said that hearing testimony from abuse victims was an “opportunity to recalibrate” ministry, and that US bishops took decisive action following the 2002 plenary session in Dallas. Cupich was joined by Teresa Kettlekamp, executive director of the bishops’ office of Child and Youth Protection, who highlighted the progress the Church has made in the last decade. “We’ve trained more than five million children and two million adults in creating a safe environment,” Kettlekamp said, suggesting that the Church “has done more than any other organization” to help protect children. Cupich noted that Church leaders must continue to be vigilant in this area, especially as new bishops who did not have the same exposure to the victims’ testimony are appointed. “We veterans have to keep this on the front burner,” he said.

Turning to the economic front, John L. Allen, Jr., senior correspondent for National Catholic Reporter and CNN analyst, made a global case for transparency, accountability, and collaboration. Allen said that in many places around the globe, particularly the Middle East, Africa, and India, best management practices are literally a matter of survival for local churches. “Look around the Catholic global world, and Catholic leaders are open to and desperate for tools for transparency, accountability, and collaboration. We must speak to global experience to be successful,” he said. “It is the importance of perspective. Start with experience and then craft solutions for success that speak to those experiences.”

Seeking to illustrate what best practices look like on the ground, the Leadership Roundtable honored the Most Rev. Dale Melczek, bishop of Gary, IN, and Catholic Relief Services with the 2010 Leadership Roundtable Best Practices Award. Bishop Melczek led the implementation of Catholic Standards for Excellence, 55 codes that ensure Catholic parishes, dioceses, and nonprofits are transparent and accountable, in nearly all the parishes in the diocese. Catholic Relief Services was honored for its commitment to excellence in stewardship, especially in light of the massive influx of donations following the earthquake in Haiti. CRS was designated by the US Bishops Conference to serve as the official Catholic organization to respond to the devastation, and to date it has spent over \$15 million in aid, with a total accounting of how it is spending the money.

Patrick Grace, co-founder of Apollo Philanthropy Partners, and Alan Rappaport, vice-chair at Roundtable Investment Partners, each offered strategies to strengthen the Church’s finances. Both programs rely on utilizing the full range of Church assets in the US. One is a coordinated procurement program, in which the Church capitalizes on its buying power, estimated to be \$105 billion, to save billions of dollars on the purchasing of goods. Grace said that the Church is missing out on an enormous savings, which could be redirected toward its apostolic mission. Rappaport led a discussion on strategic investing opportunities, in which dioceses could pool their resources for higher returns. Both schemes are hoping to begin pilot phases soon, the presenters said, and remain open for participation from more dioceses.

Jack Connors, Jr., co-founder and chairman emeritus of Hill/Holliday advertising, described his role in helping to revitalize Catholic schools in the Boston area. He said that schools require individualized solutions, and that collaboration is the key to success. He reached out to philanthropists who seem reluctant to undertaking large projects, asking, “What will we build? Are we a generation of people who just use things?” Other presenters included John Kaneb, CEO of HP Hood Company; Paul Schervish, director of the Center on Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College; and the Most Rev. Arthur Serratelli, bishop of Paterson, NJ, who spoke about the decline of apostolic authority and its effect on the sex abuse crisis.

The National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management is an organization of laity, religious, and clergy working together to promote excellence and best practices in the management, finances, and human resource development of the Catholic Church in the U.S. through the greater incorporation of the expertise of the laity. More information is available at www.TheLeadershipRoundtable.org.



Teresa Kettlekamp, executive director of the USCCB's office for Child and Youth Protection, said that the Church in the US has done more to help protect children than any other organization.



Alan Rappaport, vice-chair of Roundtable Investment Partners, said the Church could reap higher returns by pooling their resources together.



Ken Hackett, president of Catholic Relief Services, center, is presented with the 2010 Leadership Roundtable Best Practices Award. He is joined, left to right, by Mark Melia and Michael Wiest of CRS, and Geoff Boisi and Kerry Robinson of the Leadership Roundtable.



The Diocese of Gary, IN, and the Most Rev. Dale Melczek were presented with the 2010 Leadership Roundtable Best Practices Award. Accepting the award with Bishop Melczek is Anne Verbeke, far right, program director for the diocese. Kerry Robinson, left, and Geoff Boisi of the Leadership Roundtable presented the award.



Trustees of the Leadership Roundtable, left to right, Tom Healey, former undersecretary of the US treasury; Chuck Geschke, co-founder of Adobe Systems; and Fr. Jack Wall, president of the Catholic Church Extension Society offer an update of the work of the Leadership Roundtable at the annual meeting.



The Most Rev. Timothy Senior, auxiliary bishop of Philadelphia, celebrated mass for the Leadership Roundtable's annual meeting.

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