

TAKE ACTION



# Time's Up Catholics Demand Truth

Justice for survivors and civil recourse  
Church transparency and accountability  
Dismantling patriarchy & clericalism in all its forms  
[www.catholictoo.org](http://www.catholictoo.org)

**SPEAKUP**

**TAKEACTION**

**#TIMESUP**

RESOURCES FOR WRITING A LETTER, ORGANIZING A WITNESS/PRAYER VIGIL IN YOUR DIOCESE

## **TIMES UP: CATHOLICS DEMAND TRUTH AS THE WORLD'S BISHOPS GATHER WITH POPE FRANCIS IN ROME FROM FEBRUARY 21 – 24, 2019 TO ADDRESS CLERGY SEX ABUSE AND ITS COVER UP.**

Catholics are horrified at the manifold revelations of clergy sex abuse and cover up that have rocked the Catholic Church. They are calling on Pope Francis, the U.S. bishops, and the world's bishops to undertake radical reforms that will address clergy sex abuse and its cover up by those in authority.

On August 14, a Grand Jury in Pennsylvania released a report detailing the abuse suffered by over 1,000 child victims, and names over 300 Catholic priests as credibly accused. In addition to the individual crimes, the report shed light on the decades long effort of Catholic Church officials to shield the perpetrators from prosecution, and generally hide details of the crimes from the public. More statewide investigations are underway in Washington D.C., Virginia, Iowa, Florida, Illinois, Arkansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Vermont, etc. It is clear that more revelations of cover up will follow, crippling the credibility of our leaders and the desire of Catholics to remain within the Church.

From February 21 – 24, 2019, Pope Francis will meet with the heads of the bishops' conferences from around the world to draw up a protocol for addressing clergy sex abuse. The organizers of the conference, Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich, Mumbai Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna and the Rev. Hans Zollner have stated, "Absent a comprehensive and communal response, not only will we fail to bring healing to victim survivors, but the very credibility of the Church to carry on the mission of Christ will be in jeopardy throughout the world."

They also stated, “Each of us needs to own this challenge, coming together in solidarity, humility, and penitence to repair the damage done, sharing a common commitment to transparency, and holding everyone in the church accountable.” They have urged conference presidents to meet with victims before they come to Rome “to learn firsthand the suffering they have endured,” an appeal that reflects the bishops’ prolonged unwillingness to meet with victims, a reluctance that is inexcusable.

Ireland’s Marie Collins, survivor of clerical sexual abuse and former member of the Papal Commission for the Protection of Minors urges those gathered at the February summit to get on with the “practical work of setting down in writing agreed policies and signing off on them by end of meeting.” She notes, “If not, it will be just more words. Time for words is past; time now for actions.”

This organizing packet offers the tools you need to gather Catholics in your city or region and write a letter to Catholic leaders demanding transparency, accountability, and reform!

**DOWNLOAD THIS PACKET AT: [CATHOLICTOO.ORG](https://www.catholictoo.org)**

## **ACTIONS IN ROME DURING THE ROME MEETING**

THERE ARE TWO PUBLIC WITNESSES IN ROME DURING THE BISHOP MEETING.

- THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AT 6PM (ROME TIME), OUTDOOR VIGIL
- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23 AT 11AM (ROME TIME), “MARCH TO ZERO”

GO TO [HTTPS://WWW.ECAGLOBAL.ORG/MARCH-TO-ZERO/](https://www.ecaglobal.org/march-to-zero/) TO LEARN MORE AND/OR PARTICIPATE.

## **THIS ORGANIZING KIT CONTAINS \_\_\_\_\_**

- Time’s Up platform
- Template for letter to personalize for your bishop
- Ideas for organizing
- Prayer Service
- Sample bulletin insert
- Sample template for media advisory
- Sample media advisory

- Templates for handheld signs

## **PLATFORM**

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**As concerned Catholics, we call for:**

### **1. Survivor Justice and Civil Recourse**

- Civil investigations of clergy sexual abuse in every state.
- The immediate cessation of efforts to block the lengthening of statutes of limitations on sexual abuse of minors.
- Eliminating nondisclosure agreements that bar victims from cooperating in criminal prosecutions.
- Providing payment for counseling and financial compensation to anyone bringing forth any allegation(s) of sexual abuse by church staff that is deemed credible by an independent panel of expert reviewers.
- Developing a process of public reconciliation where victims and survivors of abuse can speak clearly and directly to church leaders.
- Tightening laws that require professionals to report abuse
- Establishing survivor-led listening sessions in every diocese.
- Establishing systems for diocesan staff and clergy to speak up without retaliation.

### **2. Church Transparency and Accountability**

- Open all files regarding sexual abuse at the Vatican, national bishops' conference, and diocesan levels for review by experts.
- Remove and prosecute all bishops who knowingly reassigned sexually abusive priests from their leadership positions and take steps to ensure that those who are appointed have not engaged in criminal activity.
- Categorically reject any proposal that places a metropolitan bishop in an oversight position and support Cardinal Blaise Cupich's statement that the bishops must "cede all authority" to people outside of the hierarchical system creating panels of lay experts (or increasing the independence and authority of the National Lay Review Board) to review and respond to all complaints of sexual abuse and its cover up.
- Publishing compliance reports from each diocese with the Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People on the USCCB website.
- Publishing the names of all credibly accused abusers on diocesan websites.
- Training all church staff to recognize signs of sexual abuse and to support victims.

### **3. Patriarchy and Clericalism Dismantled in All Its Forms**

- Including women fully and equally at every level of church ministry and governance.

- Ordaining married men, women, and people of all genders.
- Establishing systems for evaluating the suitability of seminary candidates.
- Reforming seminary education such that the culture of clerical privilege is vanquished and replaced with a culture of mutuality, respect, and the sharing of authority between laity and ordained.
- Establishing a process for participation of local laity in the selection/election of their bishops.
- Establishing robust lay representation on all pastoral councils and ecumenical councils where authority is equally shared by lay and ordained.
- Implementing Vatican II fully by developing lay leadership, authority, ministry, and governance.

## TEMPLATE FOR WRITING A LETTER TO BISHOPS \_\_\_\_\_

Find bishops' and cardinals' addresses here:

<http://www.usccb.org/about/bishops-and-dioceses/all-dioceses.cfm>

[Bishop's Name]

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Dear Bishop [add name],

I am a concerned Catholic who is demanding truth, accountability, and action from those in authority in cases of clergy sex abuse and the subsequent cover up.

[Share personal story here].

From February 21 – 24, 2019, Pope Francis will meet with the heads of the bishops' conferences from around the world to draw up a protocol for addressing clergy sex abuse. The organizers of the conference, Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich, Mumbai Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Maltese Archbishop Charles Scicluna and the Rev. Hans Zollner have [stated](#), "Absent a comprehensive and communal response, not only will we fail to bring healing to victim survivors, but the very credibility of the Church to carry on the mission of Christ will be in jeopardy throughout the world."

They also stated, "Each of us needs to own this challenge, coming together in solidarity, humility, and penitence to repair the damage done, sharing a common commitment to transparency, and holding everyone in the church accountable." They have urged conference presidents to meet with victims before they come to Rome "to learn firsthand the suffering they have endured," an appeal that reflects the bishops' prolonged unwillingness to meet with victims. That reluctance is inexcusable.

As you are aware, on August 14, a Grand Jury in Pennsylvania released a report detailing the abuse suffered by over 1,000 child victims, and names over 300 Catholic priests as credibly accused. In addition to the individual crimes, the report shed light on the decades long effort of Catholic Church officials to shield the perpetrators

from prosecution, and generally hide details of the crimes from the public. More statewide investigations are underway in Washington D.C., Virginia, Iowa, Florida, Illinois, Arkansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Vermont, etc. It is clear that more revelations of cover up will follow, crippling the credibility of our leaders and the desire of Catholics to remain within the Church.

Along with many other Catholics, I am calling on Pope Francis and the U.S. Bishops to undertake radical reforms that will address clergy sex abuse and its cover up by those in authority urging that leaders

- Immediately report to civil authorities any credible accusation of abuse by priests or cover-up by the hierarchy.
- Open all files regarding sexual abuse at the Vatican, national bishops' conference, and diocesan levels for review by experts.
- Remove and prosecute all bishops who knowingly reassigned sexually abusive priests from their leadership positions and take steps to ensure that those who are appointed have not engaged in criminal activity.
- Categorically reject any proposal that places a metropolitan bishop in in an oversight position and support Cardinal Blaise Cupich's statement that the bishops must "cede all authority" to people outside of the hierarchical system creating panels of lay experts to review and respond to all complaints of sexual abuse.
- Immediately cease efforts to block the lengthening of statutes of limitations on sexual abuse of minors.
- Provide payment for counseling and financial compensation to anyone bringing forth any allegation(s) of sexual abuse by church staff that is deemed credible by an independent panel of expert reviewers.
- Develop a process of public reconciliation where victims and survivors of abuse can speak clearly and directly to church leaders.
- Categorically reject the scapegoating of Gay men in the priesthood to make clear that there is no causal connection between sexual abuse and homosexuality.
- Make individual apologies to every victim and affected family.
- Take concrete steps to dismantle clericalism and employ women and lay people at all levels of church governance and ministry.

As a Catholic who cares deeply about our Church, I urge Pope Francis and the U.S. Bishops to take robust action in addressing this crisis in our Church today with the aim of healing those who are victims/survivors and re-establishing trust with Catholics in the U.S. and elsewhere.

I would welcome a meeting with you to discuss this matter and your plans for addressing the crisis. I look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely,  
[Your name, and contact information]

## **IDEAS FOR ORGANIZING** \_\_\_\_\_

**Times Up: Catholics Demand Truth. Take Action!**

Catholics are calling TIMESUP on abuse in the Catholic Church. Organize a witness in your region for the fourth weekend of February.

### **Step 1: Find your people**

- Ask 2 – 3 people you know who can help you organize, or connect with a local group affiliated with efforts to address clergy sex abuse and the systematic cover up. This is a great way to feel supported and make sure that you don't take on too much responsibility in the planning. Divide responsibilities (publicity and media, local arrangements, day-of rituals or speakers, etc.).

### **Step 2: Choose your date and location (& do your homework):**

- Decide where and to hold your witness that will bring the most people together. This may be outside your parish before or after mass, or in front of a bishops' residence. Consider foot and car traffic as well as transportation and parking.
- Check your local laws and file for a permit if necessary. Often a small group can witness without a permit, but depending on your location, you may consider filing for a permit, discuss the witness with someone at the parish, etc.
- Decide who might offer a testimony, lead prayers, sing, and then create a short "program" or plan for how you will spend your time.

### **Step 3: Get the word out!**

- Start with a simple invitation with who, what, where, when and why.
- Create a Facebook event, flyer and simple email and tell your friends.
- Share your event on social media using #TimesUp
- Share your details with the Time's Up organizers

**Who:** Concerned Catholics demanding truth, action and accountability

**What:** TimesUP: Catholics Demand Truth

**Where:** Local Cathedral, etc.

**When:** [date] or [time]

**Why:** (See the Platform and add your words)

**What to wear/bring:** You may ask folks wear a specific color, wear stoles, or bring something like signs or musical instruments.

### **Step 4: Widen your reach!**

- Get the word out about your event to bring supporters and alert the media.

- Send a media advisory to local news outlets (See sample). Many communities have online calendars where you can easily add your event.
- Several days before your action call up your local paper and radio stations: tell them what you are doing and why. Take photos and videos which you can give to the press.
- Write a letter to the editor, discussing the purpose of your event, its global support, and the wider effects of abuse in the Catholic Church.

### Step 5: Day of Checklist

- Review the “Platform” and make sure you have a coordinator, media contact, and photographer there.
- Print leaflets to hand out, prayer services, the “program” or any materials you may need.
- Make extra signs for people to hold or bring supplies so people can make signs.
- Bring a sign-up sheet to collect email addresses for follow-up actions.

## PRAYER SERVICE ---

**Notes:** *Please adapt this brief prayer service to your particular circumstances, considering your space, assembly, and local situation. If you expect a large assembly and do not have access to sound equipment and/or to facilitate participation, consider printing a worship aid with song lyrics, prayers, and responses. If you will not be printing a worship aid, consider adapting the opening prayer and announce all responses for the assembly.*

### Introductory Rites

**Opening Song Suggestions:** *For the Healing of the Nations* by Brian Wren; *Christ Be Our Light* by Bernadette Farrell; *Shelter Me, O God* by Bob Hurd; *Be Not Afraid* by Bob Dufford

### **Gathering Remarks:**

Prayer Leader/organizer: In the Gospel which we will read today, we hear the story of Jesus healing a deaf man who also suffered from a speech impediment. Jesus’ command, “*Ephphatha!* - Be opened!,” rings in our ears in a particular way this day in light of clergy sex abuse and cover up.

We come together today as God’s people, in need of healing. In need of openness. In need of truth. In need of purpose and mission. For we say now: “Time’s Up! No more! Never again!”

Therefore, we come before you O God of openness, healing, love beyond measure, and purpose, and we pray...

### **Opening Prayer:**

*If you will not be printing a worship aid, you may allow a moment of brief silent prayer in between each line of the opening prayer or the prayer may be read responsively between two readers.*

One: For openness to hear and speak your healing words, "Ephphatha!" Be opened!

**All: For courage that seeps deep into our being, replacing all fear.**

One: For intention and purpose to become your agents of truth and healing.

**All: For the healing of all victims, of whatever race and hue.**

One: For our own healing, to continually seek out and then speak Your truth alone.

**All: So that this gross injustice is over, done with, never again to occur. In Jesus' name. AMEN!**

### **Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading:** Isaiah 49:13-18

**Psalm Response:** *Based on Psalm 85*

**R :** *Come, O God, and set us free*

Restore us again, O Spirit of Truth; burn with the refining Fire of Love! **R**

We cannot live separated from You; cast out the demons of fear, doubt, and illusion. **R**

Have compassion on your people, O Holy One, and grant us your forgiveness. **R**

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will embrace one another. **R**

Wisdom will spring up from the ground and truth will look down from the sky. **R**

(adapted from *Psalms for Praying: An Invitation to Wholeness* by Nan C. Merrill. Continuum, 2008.)

**Gospel and witness/reflection:** Mark 7:31-37

### **Ritual: Signing of the ears, eyes, mouth, and open hands**

*Consider inviting the assembly to extend their hands in blessing over one another and/or over the parish or cathedral church as a symbol of the entire Church*

**R :** *Be Opened!*

In need of healing, in need of truth, in need of openness we now turn to our loving God and ask for God's blessing for ourselves and for our church.

O God of compassion, open our ears, to hear and respond with love to the anguished cries of victim-survivors of clergy sex abuse. We pray, **R**

O God of vision, open our eyes, to see clearly the systems and structures that that sustain injustice and envision a bold way forward to becoming your Holy People. We pray, **R**



O God of truth, open our lips, to speak the truth to all and especially to power -- plainly and without impediment: the truth about clergy sex abuse, about the cover up, about our experience. We pray, **R**

O God of creation, open our hands, to courageously take up the difficult, prophetic work you set before us and work to build your reign of truth, justice, and love. We pray, **R**

### **Prayers of the Faithful**

**R** : Hear us, O God

Prayer leader/organizer: Trusting in God's everlasting love and care for us, we lift up our needs:

For victim-survivors of clergy sex abuse, that they may be opened to tell the truth of their experience and find listening ears and open hearts when they do; that they may be healed of physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds; and that they may receive full and unqualified justice, we pray:

For the empowerment of civil officials and for laws that uphold the dignity and rights of victims; for the overturning of statutes of limitations; and an end to the immoral use of legal maneuvers and tactics, we pray:

For Pope Francis, bishops and cardinals, priests and all those in authority in our Church, that they may be open, transparent and forthcoming with the truth about clergy sex abuse and coverups, we pray:

For abusers and those involved in cover ups, that they may be moved to accept responsibility and punishment and penance for their crimes, find professional help, and seek forgiveness, we pray:

For an end to patriarchy, which marginalizes, excludes and even scapegoats women and LGBTQ persons and for an openness to healthier theologies and understandings of all humanity, we pray:

For an end to clericalism, which falsely claims the superiority of the ordained over everyone else, we pray:

For the empowerment of laity, that they may take up their rightful place in the life, mission, and governance of the Church at every level, we pray:

For all of us gathered here, that we may be emboldened to speak out plainly, courageously, prophetically against individuals, systems, and structures that abuse and silence, we pray:

### **Closing**

#### **Sending Forth:**

ALL: \_\_\_\_\_ Passionate, Living, Enlivening God,  
You thirst for us, that we might truly become Your people.

Open us up.

Heal us from every wound that bows down to fear and division.  
Scatter the darkness within and without;  
Shatter the silence, the silencing, the trepidation to speak plainly.

Stand us up in courage, by Your Holy Name,  
To create, with Your power, a Church of which you dream,  
A Church that cares deeply, loves justly, and walks humbly with You.

This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen!

**Closing Hymn:** *We Shall Overcome* by Zilphia Horton, Frank Hamilton, Guy Carawan, and Pete Seeger; *We Are Called* by David Haas; *They'll Know We Are Christians* by Peter Scholtes; *Sing a New Church* by Delores Dufner (music NETTLETON)

## **SAMPLE BULLETIN INSERT**

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### **Catholics call for truth and transparency in the cases of clergy sex abuse cover up**

Concerned Catholics are demanding truth, action and accountability in cases of clergy sex abuse and the subsequent cover up by bishops.

From February 22 – 25, 2019, Pope Francis will meet with the heads of the bishops' conferences from around the world to discuss protocols for addressing clergy sex abuse and its coverup.

On August 14, a Grand Jury in Pennsylvania released a report detailing the abuse suffered by over 1,000 child victims, and names over 300 Catholic priests as credibly accused. In addition to the individual crimes, the report shed light on the decades long effort of Catholic Church officials to shield the perpetrators from prosecution, and generally hide details of the crimes from the public. More statewide investigations are underway in Washington D.C., Virginia, Iowa, Florida, Illinois, Arkansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Vermont, etc.

Catholics are calling on Pope Francis and the U.S. Bishops to undertake radical reforms that will address clergy sex abuse and its cover up by those in authority urging that leaders

- Immediately report to civil authorities any credible accusation of abuse by priests or cover-up by the hierarchy.
- Open all files regarding sexual abuse at the Vatican, national bishops' conference, and diocesan levels for review by experts.
- Remove and prosecute all bishops who knowingly reassigned sexually abusive priests from their leadership positions and take steps to ensure that those who are appointed have not engaged in criminal activity.
- Categorically reject any proposal that places a metropolitan bishop in in an oversight position and support Cardinal Blaise Cupich's statement that the bishops must "cede all authority" to people outside of the hierarchical system creating panels of lay experts to review and respond to all complaints of sexual abuse.

- Immediately cease efforts to block the lengthening of statutes of limitations on sexual abuse of minors.
- Provide payment for counseling and financial compensation to anyone bringing forth any allegation(s) of sexual abuse by church staff that is deemed credible by an independent panel of expert reviewers.
- Develop a process of public reconciliation where victims and survivors of abuse can speak clearly and directly to church leaders.
- Categorically reject the scapegoating of Gay men in the priesthood to make clear that there is no causal connection between sexual abuse and homosexuality.
- Make individual apologies to every victim and affected family.
- Take concrete steps to dismantle clericalism and employ women and lay people at all levels of church governance and ministry.

We urge Pope Francis and the U.S. Bishops to engage in a robust, independent, and transparent examination of the facts with laity in leadership as a step toward re-establishing trust with Catholics in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Where: Join other concerned Catholics at [ Local Cathedral etc.]

Date and time: [date] [time]

To learn more go to: [website, facebook page, contact name and email, etc.]

## **TEMPLATE FOR MEDIA ADVISORY** \_\_\_\_\_

To spread the word about your event, advertise on facebook, twitter, Instagram and other social media sites. Also - write and send a media advisory to your local Catholic newspaper and local and regional secular papers. Use an easy to read font, in 12 point size. Be sure to include a phone number where you can be contacted in case anyone has questions!

Here is a sample template:

**Release date:**

**For Immediate Release**

**Title of your Event:**

**Contact: [Your name, title, telephone, email]**

**City: [Your city]**

**Text**

Catholics and faith communities from [your city] will gather at [location] at [time] to witness with [ex: a march, a Mass, a prayer service, etc.].

[Add a more complete description of the actual event – who, what, when, where].

[add a couple of quotes from local participants here].

To learn more, visit [website, Facebook page, blog, etc.]

###

About: [Add section describing your parish, group, organization, etc].

## **SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY FROM THE TWIN CITIES**

### **Time's Up: Catholics Demand Truth** *(sample from the Twin Cities)*

*Use this sample media advisory to announce your vigil to your local television, newspaper and radio stations.  
Make edits to the advisory that represent your local situation and share with local media contacts.*

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**Contact:** Zach Johnson, 773 988 2352, zach@cta-usa.org

#### **For Immediate Release**

[date]

#### **Catholics Across Country Organize Coordinated Public Witness, Demand Change**

**WHAT:** As part of a nationwide series of vigils, local Catholics will gather on the sidewalk in front of St. Paul's Cathedral [day], [date] for a prayer service. This vigil is part of an ongoing response to the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report on sexual abuse committed by Catholic clergy and the subsequent cover up by Catholic church officials.

Specific demands for this national series of vigils regard: (1) Survivor Justice and Civil Recourse, (2) Church Transparency and Accountability (3) Dismantling Patriarchy in All Its Forms (4) Dismantling Clericalism in All Its Forms.

For a complete list of specific demands, see the attached: [Platform for Catholics Demand Truth](#)

**WHERE:** St. Paul's Cathedral; 239 Selby Ave, St Paul, MN 55102, in coordination with cities across the country.

**WHEN:** February 22, 2019 at 1:00pm.

**WHO:** Catholics and allies will gather for a prayer service centered around survivors of clerical abuse, and the platform of demands.

**WHY:** On August 14, a Grand Jury in Pennsylvania released a report detailing the abuse suffered by over 1,000 child victims, and names over 300 Catholic priests as credibly accused. In addition to the individual crimes, the report shed light on the decades long effort of Catholic Church officials to shield the perpetrators from prosecution, and generally hide details of the crimes from the public.

For more information on other vigils, see <http://catholictoo.org/>

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## **HAND-HELD SIGNS TEMPLATES**

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- Bring your voice to **Times Up: Catholics Demand Truth** by making signs to carry at your event.
- You can also use these easy-to-print hand-held signs... use the templates on the following pages.
- Print your sign(s) on regular copy paper.
- Then attach to sturdy paper and affix to a cardboard tube.
- Carry your sign with you as you gather with others to witness.

Thank you for making a difference!



**CATHOLICS  
DEMAND AN  
ACCOUNTING  
FOR CLERGY  
SEX ABUSE  
COVER UP**

**COVERING UP  
CLERGY SEX  
ABUSE**

***IS A CRIME***



**BISHOPS,  
NOW IS THE  
TIME FOR  
TRUTH  
TRANSPARENCY  
ACTION**

## SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

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- Women's Ordination Conference [www.womensordination.org](http://www.womensordination.org)
- SEPA WOC <http://www.sepawoc.org/>
- RAPPORT (Renewing and Priestly People Ordination Reconsidered Today)
- Quixote Center <https://quixote.org>
- New Ways <https://www.newwaysministry.org/>
- FutureChurch [www.futurechurch.org](http://www.futurechurch.org)
- DignityUSA <https://www.dignityusa.org>
- CORPUS <http://www.corpus.org>
- Call To Action [www.cta-usa.org](http://www.cta-usa.org)

Questions? Contact: [debrose@futurechurch.org](mailto:debrose@futurechurch.org), 216.228.0869

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION!**

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**[DEBROSE@FUTURECHURCH.ORG](mailto:DEBROSE@FUTURECHURCH.ORG), 216.228.0869 x 3**