



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Memorandum

To: Diocesan Cultural Diversity, Ethnic Ministry and People on the Move Directors
Diocesan Communications Directors
Diocesan Pro-Life Directors
Diocesan Directors of Child and Youth Protection
Diocesan Safe Environment / Victim Assistance Coordinators
Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Directors and NFP Coordinators
Diocesan Youth and/or Young Adult Ministry Directors
Diocesan Social Justice Directors
Directors of Catholic Charities with Resettlement Programs
Diocesan Directors of Evangelization and Catechesis
Diocesan Superintendents of Schools
Diocesan Secretaries of Education
Diocesan Vocations Directors
Diocesan Directors of Liturgy and Divine Worship
Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Officers
State Catholic Conference Directors

From: Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church
Department of Communications
Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection
Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth
Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development
Department of Migration and Refugee Services
Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis
Secretariat of Catholic Education
Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations
Secretariat of Divine Worship
Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs
Office of Government Relations
Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty

Date: October 12, 2016

Re: **The Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America**
Orlando, Florida, July 1-4, 2017

As you may know, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will convene an unprecedented gathering of key leaders from dioceses and Catholic organizations from all across the country next summer in order to assess the challenges and opportunities of our time, particularly in the context of the Church in the United States. The gathering will assemble participants for a

strategic conversation, under the leadership of the bishops, on forming missionary disciples to animate the Church and to engage the culture. Here are some details:

- *The Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America* will be held at the Hyatt Regency across from the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, from Saturday, July 1, to Tuesday, July 4, 2017.
- Inspired by *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Convocation will form leaders who will be equipped and re-energized to share the Gospel as missionary disciples, in their particular roles, while offering fresh insights informed by new research, communications strategies, and successful models.
- This is an invitation-only event. Most leaders will be attending as diocesan delegations with their bishops. Others will be attending as leaders, identified by the USCCB, from Catholic organizations, movements and apostolates, missions, religious institutes, agencies and institutions. A helpful brochure, providing more detail, is attached.
- **If you are interested in participating in this historic gathering, it would be helpful to communicate soon with your bishop your desire to be considered**, while understanding that the size and membership of diocesan delegations are at the discretion of each bishop. He has also been asked to appoint an official liaison to the Convocation, who will coordinate registering the diocesan team.
- Each diocese will be responsible for covering the travel, lodging, and an average \$450 per-person registration fee (covering a number of meals) for the members of their delegation. Very affordable rates have been negotiated with the five hotels hosting the Convocation.
- Already, \$400,000 in scholarships has been pledged to help defray costs for dioceses in need, who would otherwise not be able to send a delegation.
- Since not every diocesan or parish leader will be able to participate in the Convocation on-site, we hope to stream important addresses and liturgies. More information will continue to be posted at www.usccb.org/convocation/.

The most exciting element of the Convocation, though, isn't what happens in Orlando next July; rather, it is what happens beyond that gathering. When diocesan delegations return home, they will bring both the tools and the spirit to influence parish and diocesan communities, forming a Church of the *missionary option* that goes to the peripheries, as envisioned by Pope Francis. We encourage your participation in this historic Convocation (at the discretion of your bishop, of course). For additional information, please feel free to contact the Conference office that serves as your primary communications link for USCCB news.