

Contact:

Nicole Sotelo, Communications Director, 773.404.0004 x285

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For Immediate Release

**Statement from Call To Action Regarding Bishops' 2011 Spring Assembly:  
Bishops Empower Themselves Not to Report Abuse Allegations, Catholics Speak Out**

After this year's revelations that the Philadelphia Archbishop and Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop failed to report sexual abuse allegations to their review boards and to civil authorities, Catholics of good will expected the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to revise their sexual abuse policies at this week's Spring General Assembly. Today, the bishops conclude their gathering without making any substantive changes to their sex abuse policies.

The bishops did manage to authorize work on a new preaching document, issue a policy statement and approve new musical translations of the new liturgy to begin in September.

However, when it came to changing and further strengthening the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and its related *Essential Norms*, they added little and made minor tweaks to dates and numbers. One bishop even suggested that some of those who have abused should be able to return to ministry. Equally egregious, the bishops did not add a section to the charter that would mandate Bishops share sexual abuse allegations with their own diocesan review boards and, thus, potentially keep known abusers in ministry.

As a result, the power to keep a pedophile religious leader away from children continues to rest in the hands of the bishop—the same place it has always rested. Based on the last fifty years of scandal, we know this only leads to additional abuse victims and greater harm to the Church as a whole.

*Call To Action encourages fellow Catholics to continue to speak up about any signs of abuse and direct their concerns, not only to church authorities, but to civil authorities. For assistance, contact SNAP, the Survivor's Network of those Abused by Priests, [www.snapnetwork.org](http://www.snapnetwork.org)*