

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2009

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**LARGEST PROGRESSIVE CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
ISSUES STATEMENT ON NUNS INVESTIGATION ONE
WEEK BEFORE U.S. BISHOPS MEET IN BALTIMORE**

In anticipation of the U.S. Conference of Catholic bishops meeting in Baltimore, the largest annual gathering of progressive Catholics issued a statement of support to nuns during this time of investigation by the Vatican and called the bishops to do the same.

The bishops' meeting takes place next week, the same week that women religious are asked to submit their responses to the Vatican-issued questionnaire that is part of the investigation. The deadline for the questionnaire is November 20th.

More than 2,000 Catholics gathered in Milwaukee as part of the Call To Action conference and on Sunday morning unanimously affirmed a statement of support for women religious:

"Since January of 2009, the Vatican has investigated and sought to silence Catholic sisters in the United States. They have set a deadline of November 20th for the women religious' communities to respond to its probing questionnaire. Now more than ever we must speak out against the few bishops who continue to wield the sword of division, rather than extend the hand of unity.

To our fellow Catholics in the United States and around the globe, women religious have taught us how to live the gospel and open our arms until they embraced all of God's people. It is now our responsibility to put into action the lessons we have learned and ensure that our sisters in faith are not ripped from the church's embrace,

To our courageous sisters, you who have been the bedrock of our church and country, know that the people you have faithfully served stand beside you as you have stood with us.

To those who are doing the investigation, your actions do not reflect the welcoming and embracing love that Jesus demonstrated in the gospels. We invite you to have a conversion of heart and join us in standing with the women religious.

In every generation God raises up prophets to point the way towards the gospel vision of inclusion. Women religious are these prophets. Today we stand not with those who cling to the gates of exclusion but with the prophets who open the gates and call us to live as one."

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Call To Action (CTA) is a Catholic movement working for equality and justice in the Church and society. An independent national organization of over 25,000 people and 50 local chapters, CTA believes that the Spirit of God is at work in the whole church, not just its appointed leaders.