

Cardinals to discuss sex abuse crisis Nov. 19

John L. Allen Jr. | Nov. 8, 2010 NCR Today

A number of hot-button issues facing Catholicism, including the sexual abuse crisis, will be discussed by all the cardinals of the world on Nov. 19, just ahead of a consistory to induct new members into the church's most exclusive club.

The Vatican announced today that the cardinals, already planning to gather in Rome for a Nov. 20 ceremony for the creation of 24 new members, will take part in a "day of reflection and prayer" on Nov. 19.

Cardinals, traditionally dubbed "Princes of the Church," are the most senior advisors to the pope.

The agenda for the day of reflection includes:

"The situation of religious freedom in the world and new challenges," to be led by the Vatican's Secretary of State, Italian Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

"The liturgy in the life of the church today," led by the prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Spanish Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera.

"Ten Years from *Dominus Iesus*," an August 2000 declaration from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which dealt with the relationship between Christianity and other religions. That session will be led by Italian Cardinal-elect Angelo Amato, current the prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. While serving as the number two official in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Amato was a principal author of *Dominus Iesus*.

"The response of the church to cases of sexual abuse," led by American Cardinal William Levada, Ratzinger's successor as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The recent apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, which provides for the creation of new structures, called "personal ordinariates," for former Anglicans wishing to join the Catholic church. That session will also be led by Levada.

While still at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the future Pope Benedict XVI spearheaded efforts to accelerate the Vatican's response to the sexual abuse crisis, among other things creating streamlined procedures for removing abusers from the priesthood.

Critics, however, say the response has been insufficient, especially because bishops who concealed abuse, they argue, have not been held accountable.

In a statement this morning in response to the Vatican announcement, the Survivors' Network of those Abused by Priests expressed skepticism about the coming session.

"Before any hopes get raised, let's remember that it's likely that every man in that room next week has ignored and concealed clergy sex crimes or is doing so right now," the statement asserted. "The prospects of substantial reform happening next week are therefore pretty slim."

Pope Benedict will elevate 24 new cardinals on Nov. 20, including twenty who are under 80 and thus eligible to vote for the next pope. That will bring the total membership of the College of Cardinals to 203, including 121 electors.

Read more here: [Sex abuse, religious freedom on agenda of cardinals' meeting](#) [1]

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