



## Catholic Church policy summit needs to deliver reform

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The first major review of Catholic Church policy and governance, which starts on Sunday (3 October 2021), must deliver major reforms and allow lay Catholics greater participation in the governance of the Church according to one of Australia's most prominent church reformers.

Francis Sullivan, Chair of Catholic Social Services Australia, said today that the Catholic Church's Plenary Council is the first opportunity since the second Vatican Council in 1959 to herald in major reforms to the way in which Australia's largest religion operates.

"At the end of the coming week and more importantly at the end of the Council process next year Catholics and the broader community need to see that the Church leadership has listened," Mr Sullivan said.

"This is the time for our Church to face facts. We are in crisis. On any indicator, be it participation rates, financial health or public influence, the Church is in decline.

"The sex abuse scandal has eroded the public's trust in the Church. Ordinary Catholics have also been confronted by the shameful cover-ups, secrecy and deceit that characterised the scandal.

"Now is the opportunity for the Church leaders to implement real, meaningful change to make our church more transparent, more inclusive and more open to the needs of the 5 million Catholics across Australia," Mr Sullivan said.

Francis Sullivan will be posting a blog on the Catholic Social Services Australia website at the conclusion of each day of the Plenary.

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