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Prominent Catholics Reach Out To Democratic and Republican Parties

Democrats Have Answered; Waiting for Response from Republicans

Washington, DC: Three Catholic leaders who convened the Convention for the Common Good have been invited to the Democratic National Convention in Denver next week. Sister Catherine Pinkerton, CSJ, of NETWORK, will deliver the closing benediction on Wednesday night. Also invited are Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, NETWORK Executive Director, and Alexia Kelley, Executive Director of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good and coauthor of *A Nation for All: How the Catholic Vision of the Common Good Can Save America from the Politics of Division*.

While in Denver, all three will distribute and talk about the *Platform for the Common Good*, which was written with the input of thousands of Catholics across the nation who actively work for peaceful solutions to the problems of our day. The platform, which is based on Catholic Social Teaching and the ideals of our nation's founding, provides guidelines for government policies and corporate and individual actions that promote justice. After being affirmed at the Convention for the Common Good, tens of thousands of the platforms were distributed to organizations and government representatives, including all Members of Congress and both political parties and their platform drafting committees. (To read the full platform, go to <http://www.networklobby.org/PlatformfortheCommonGood.pdf>)

The Democratic National Committee responded with invitations to the Democratic National Convention. The Republican National Committee has not yet responded.

Sister Simone Campbell, NETWORK Executive Director, commented, "We look forward to making sure that our political parties create policies and campaigns that reflect the best of our democratic ideals. The conversation in Denver should be stimulating. We are still waiting hopefully for a response from the Republicans."

"Both political parties have a long way to go in promoting public policies that advance the common good and the dignity of the human person," said Alexia Kelley, Executive Director of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good. "In this critical election year, Catholic voters expect and deserve serious debates about uplifting the poor, humane immigration reform, just economic policies and building a consistent culture of life."

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The 800 delegates who attended the Convention for the Common Good overwhelmingly affirmed the platform in July. The convention was convened in Philadelphia by NETWORK and Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, along with more than 15 sponsoring organizations. It featured prominent Catholics in public life, including Senator Bob Casey Jr. of Pennsylvania; Rep. Marcy Kaptur of Ohio; former Rep. Charles Dougherty of Pennsylvania; E.J. Dionne, Jr. of the *Washington Post*; Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*, and John Sweeney, President of the AFL-CIO. Prominent legislators who sent videotapes acknowledging the important work of the convention delegates included Senators Arlen Specter and Barack Obama.

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NETWORK—a Catholic leader in the global movement for justice and peace—educates, organizes and lobbies for economic and social transformation. Founded in 1971 by 47 Catholic sisters, NETWORK is supported by thousands of groups and individuals committed to working for social and economic justice. For more information, see www.networklobby.org.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good promotes awareness of Catholic social teaching and its core values of justice, dignity and the common good to Catholics, the media and Americans of all faiths. Through communications, grassroots outreach and strategic coordination, Catholics in Alliance works to advance the common good in the American public square. For more information please visit www.catholicsinalliance.org.