

## Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform

# MEDIA RELEASE

### International reform advocate Joan Chittister to address Australian Catholics

12 April 2020

Sister Joan Chittister, one of the Catholic world's most influential religious and social leaders, will address a national Convocation of Catholics at 9:00am EST on Sunday 2 May via Zoom from the USA.

*A vision for Catholicism: Renewal directions, priorities, hopes and aspirations*, will speak to the deep desires among Australian Catholics for fresh vision and a new direction.

Sr Joan has for 50 years advocated on behalf of peace, human rights, women's issues, and church renewal. She has a history of speaking truth to power often challenging the Church in relation to renewal.

As keynote speaker at the first of three convocations hosted by the Australian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform (ACCCR), Sr Joan will be reaching a large national audience.

ACCCR Co-Convener Andrea Dean said: 'Most Australian Catholics are alienated from their Church, unable to comprehend that their leaders protected clerics who were sexually abusing children.

'Too many bishops are distant from their people and fail to learn from everyday Catholics trying to live a good Christian life.

'The Chittister Convocation will inspire Catholics who are insisting that the Catholic Church, through the Plenary Council process, respond to this pain and address greater inclusion for all, especially women and minority groups.'

'The Plenary Council is an opportunity for much-needed change to the Catholic Church's leadership. The Australian bishops must listen to the people of the Church and open their mind to the cultural and structural changes urgently needed to rescue the church from irrelevance.

'I strongly urge lay Catholics to participate in the Convocations.'

The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge supports the Convocation and will give an official greeting to the participants. He acknowledged in a recent interview that reform is needed in the Church because 'the current mode of leadership is unsustainable'.

The Convocation will be convened by the Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform (ACCCR), a collaboration of 19 member groups across Australia demanding Church reform.

Registration is free and open to all at [accr.com.au](http://accr.com.au)

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