

**Statement of the Board of Directors
of the
Catholic Theological Society of America
on the USCCB Committee on Doctrine's
"Response to Observations by Sr. Elizabeth Johnson, C.S.J ..."
(October 11, 2011)**

We, the undersigned members of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Theological Society of America, wish to express our views on the process that led to the publication of the October 11, 2011 "Response" of the USCCB Doctrine Committee.

We are dismayed to find that the same lack of dialogical procedure evident in the Doctrine Committee's dealings with Professor Johnson prior to its March 24, 2011 Statement has now continued to the conclusion of this process with the Doctrine Committee's October 11, 2011 "Response." In spite of the fact that Professor Johnson prepared a lengthy response to the March 24 critique of her book in which she explained carefully that views ascribed to her by the Doctrine Committee were not at all her own and affirmed her willingness to engage personally in constructive dialogue with the Committee to clarify these matters, no invitation to her to enter into such dialogue with the Committee was forthcoming before the completion of its October 11 "Response."

We do not think that this procedure is appropriate to the goal of promoting understanding between bishops and theologians or to the rightful pastoral responsibilities of the Doctrine Committee. While recognizing and affirming those responsibilities, we are concerned about their manner of practice in the Doctrine Committee's actions toward Professor Johnson. To preclude dialogue aimed at mutual understanding at every stage in the process clearly is not a practice that will foster communication in the Church, and it is precisely in the Church that one would expect communication to flourish.

Signed,

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