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**Sister Simone Campbell In Advance of Judge Brett Kavanaugh's Thursday Testimony**

*"Being a Catholic does not change the accounts provided by Christine Blasey Ford, Deborah Ramirez, and Julie Swetnick. I know all too painfully that being a person of faith does not stop men from being sexual predators."*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In response to the assault allegations against Judge Brett Kavanaugh and the impending vote in the Senate, **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice** issued the following statement:

"Almost every woman I know has a #MeToo moment—often, more than one. I know I do. For centuries, the imbalance of power among the sexes has victimized anyone who is not male. **However, in this 21st century, survivors will not be silenced.** I stand in solidarity with brave women speaking up, naming their attacker, and setting the record straight.

Everywhere I turn, it seems media moguls, priests and pastors, Supreme Court nominees, and others in power are putting political spin on a history of sexual assault. As a Catholic Sister – and as a woman in the United States – these actions tear at my heart.

Regarding the latest allegations against U.S. Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, I am horrified that many of the Republican Senators are further mistreating brave, accomplished women who are coming forward. **It seems the "old boys club" is frightened of a thorough investigation that might dismantle a small corner of patriarchal power.** They seem to see this only as a partisan game where name calling and questioning of motives is appropriate. They are wrong and must be stopped.

This is not a moment for partisanship. It is a moment for truth telling.

I understand that when he testifies, Judge Kavanaugh is going to cite his Catholic faith as a shield to claim these attacks never happened. **Being a Catholic does not change the accounts provided by Christine Blasey Ford, Deborah Ramirez, and Julie Swetnick.** I know all too painfully that being a person of faith does not stop men from being sexual predators.

A faithful way forward would be to call for a full investigation of the accounts of these women. A faithful way forward would be to face and admit mistakes and failings. A faithful way forward is even to admit "I don't know" or "I don't remember." It is NOT faithful to blame the victim, hide behind the perfect image, or dodge the difficult questions with partisan name-calling.

**To Judge Brett Kavanaugh:** Jesus says in the Gospel, "the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). That does not mean hold tight to your perceived lack of wrongdoing. Rather, the truth is that we are called to own our sins, mistakes, and failings and strive to do differently. That means proceeding with the utmost respect for the dignity of the women who have been wronged. It means accepting the consequences.

**To the men of the Judiciary Committee:** Senators! Stop the partisan name-calling and search for the truth beyond the old boys club. You have no idea of what courage it takes to for women speak about such violence in a public forum. These women are paying a high and painful price for coming forward. Respect them. Listen to them. Refer the matter for a full investigation.

**To all Senators:** To rush to a vote on Friday is both imprudent and callous. It does not respect the gravity of the nomination or the human dignity of women coming forward. We must not repeat the mistakes of the 1980's. Should a vote be pushed forward on Friday, I call on you to vote no.

**And last, but certainly not least, to my brave sisters standing up and telling your stories:** Know you are not alone. You empower many of us with your courage. We will do everything we can to have your back. You help many of us, including me, to say #MeToo and #NeverAgain. Thank you for speaking your truth.

In my weeping, I trust that Jesus is correct: The truth will set us free. Let us seek that truth, prioritizing the dignity of all survivors of sexual assault."

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*NETWORKLobby – advocates for justice inspired by Catholic Sisters – educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation. They have a 46-year track record of lobbying for critical federal programs that support those at the margins and prioritize the common good. [www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org)*