



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

May 26, 2016

Dear Parents of St. Rose of Lima School:

On May 16th, I met with a small group of parishioners from St. Rose of Lima who presented me with a number of allegations against your pastor and several employees of the parish. I promised a prompt and thorough investigation and met with Father Corces the following day. Much of the material which the group has since chosen to circulate via emails and the media is old, long since discredited gossip; some is false, such as allegations that background checks were not done or waived; or some is misleading, such as the speculation about reasons for increases in tuition. However, other allegations such as those concerning facebook postings (in violation of the employee handbook), the hiring of friends and improper socializing with employees are more serious and these allegations are still being investigated.

This unfortunate chain of events has fractured the spirit and unity at this long established parish and school. It was instigated by a small group apparently in the hope of retaining the services of the IHM sisters whose decision to leave the parish is irreversible. Slanderous gossip, calumny, detraction – all sinful behaviors – have fomented division in the parish and school communities.

The mission statement of your school reads, “St. Rose of Lima Catholic School provides a nurturing and spiritual environment for its culturally diverse community. Rich in faith-based tradition, we offer our students strong spiritual and academic programs that will prepare and challenge them to give witness to Christian values throughout their lives.”

Even while the investigation of the allegations continues, to protect and promote this mission I believe it is necessary to make some immediate changes in leadership at both the parish and the school. Given the circumstances, I have asked Fr. Pedro Corces to step down as pastor of St. Rose and effective today I have appointed Dr. Donald Edwards, Associate Superintendent of the Archdiocese, as interim principal until the close of this 2015-16 school year. After conversations with her superior general, Sister Lorraine McGrew, Sister Bernadette has been relieved of her duties as principal.

Please keep all parties concerned in this sad episode in your prayers. Pray also for the children who have been dis-edified by the spectacle of adults behaving badly.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas Wenski
Archbishop of Miami