



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF LAS CRUCES

1280 Med Park Drive • Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005-3239
575-523-7577 • Fax 575-524-3874 • www.rcdlc.org

DIOCESE OF LAS CRUCES MONDAY MEMO

June 10, 2019

From: Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas + ekifg
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Las Cruces

1. This Sunday is Father's Day. We pray for all of our fathers or father figures, both living and dead, who have helped form us. A father influences his children in powerful and significant ways. Express your love and gratitude to your father and if deceased hold him up in prayer. It is a day, too, to thank our priests who serve as our spiritual fathers and serve us so generously.
2. I will be in Baltimore this week from Sunday until Thursday participating in the Spring meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. I will take part in the Campaign for Human Development Board meeting of which I am a member. I will participate in the CLINIC meeting that deals with issues related to immigration. Finally, I will take part in the Subcommittee on Africa of which I am a consultant.

During the meeting that begins on Tuesday will be addressing a number of issues including how reports of misconduct by bishops or failure by bishops to respond appropriately to allegations will be discussed.

There is a proposal to have a national report line where people can bring concerns about bishops' sexual misbehavior with minors or others as well as allegations of inappropriate response of bishops to sexual abuse reports.

The new *Motu Proprio* (*Vos Estis Lux Munda*: You are the Light of the World) calls upon Metropolitans (Archbishops of each province) to bear the responsibility of receiving allegations and in cooperation with the Holy See conduct an investigation to determine the credibility of the allegation.

Clearly part of the investigation process should include the wisdom and counsel of laity who can bring objective and professional eyes upon the allegation.

One thing that is not clear from the *Motu Proprio* is whether there is a statute of limitation (known in Canon Law as Prescription) to concerns that can be brought forward regarding bishops' response to allegation of sexual misconduct. Clearly today we have learned a hard lesson realizing that how we treated these allegations of abuse with minors in the past is not how today we know we must respond. In the past bishops

received assurances from behavioral health professionals that abusers could be remediated and returned to ministry. Today we have a zero-tolerance policy such that any credible allegation of sexual abuse with a minor prohibits a priest from ever returning to ministry.

Please pray for the bishops that the Holy Spirit will guide our discussions and we come up with policies that will protect children and vulnerable adults from harm.

3. The Board of Directors of St. Edward School (Includes the bishop, the superintendent of schools, the local pastor and the chair of the School Board) will meet on Friday, June 14 at 11:00 am to determine what will happen to the School. The parish and finance councils of both St. Edward and San Jose in Carlsbad have been consulted on their recommendation on what option they would suggest to the Board. The Board will make the final decision. It seems unlikely that the school could reopen since they have had such poor leadership in the past and have not been able to attract a critical mass of students. It is unlikely that a pre-school could occupy the building or that it could be a youth center for Carlsbad or that it could be leased to a charter school or someone else because the building is in need of major repairs and the parishes cannot afford to do that. If it is determined to sell the building consideration will be given to what can become of the property which is nearly 10 acres. I look forward to the wisdom and counsel of the parish and finance councils of the two parishes and the deliberation of the Board.
4. Our Diocesan Review Board will meet on Friday, June 14 at 4:00 pm at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. They continue to review priest files and allegations brought against those serving in the church. Their counsel and advice have been immensely helpful.
5. On Saturday, June 15 Holy Family Mission in Columbus is celebrating the beginning of its centennial year as well as celebrating the 128th anniversary of the city of Columbus. Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 am at the plaza near the church. We are expecting the Mayor of Columbus Ezekiel Salas, a Catholic, will be attending. Following the Mass there will be a fiesta including a soccer and volleyball games. I am looking forward to visiting the community which has a rich history.

Columbus, New Mexico is a village in Luna County, NM about three miles north of the Mexican Border established in 1891. It was named after the explorer Christopher Columbus. It is considered a place of historical interest as the scene of the attack in 1916 by Mexican revolutionary leader Francisco "Pancho" Villa that caused America to send 10,000 troops there in the punitive Mexican Expedition.

Congratulations to Rev. Manuel Ibarra and all the community of Holy Family as they begin this historic year marking the 100th anniversary of the mission's founding.