



# BISHOP HOFFMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

SACRED HEART CAMPUS • SJCC CAMPUS

*"To Reach and Teach the Mind, Body, Heart, and Soul of Each Child to Bring them Closer to God"*

August 21, 2020

Dear Parents and BHCS Community,

*\*\* Revised from Previous Posting \*\**

Earlier this week, news broke that Reverend Michael Zacharias, who previously served as pastor in Fremont at St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes, was arrested for sex trafficking and other charges that allegedly occurred while he was a pastor in Mansfield and Van Wert, according to the FBI. We are incredibly grateful that federal law enforcement authorities are involved in this investigation.

During Zacharias's tenure in our community, we are aware that he attended BHCS public sporting events and spiritual retreats involving clergy and other adults, where BHCS students were present. In response to this event, Bishop Thomas issued a statement to local press, saying he was "profoundly shocked and grieved to learn of these charges against one of our priests. The Church cannot and will not tolerate any such behavior and takes any sexual abuse or misconduct on the part of a cleric with the utmost seriousness ...." We all share the Bishop's feelings of sadness, outrage, and grief.

As educators and fellow parents, the BHCS governing board and I share your deep concern over these abhorrent allegations and want to emphasize our top priority is ensuring the safety and well-being of our students within the full BHCS learning environment. BHCS is fully compliant with State and Diocesan safety and student oversight policies, and we have a stringent protocol of protections and policies in place to assure our faculty and staff are regularly vetted and trained to safeguard students. These include:

- Initial background check upon hiring with 5-year follow-up
- Accomplishment of Safe Environment Training program
- Professional development including identification of potential predator traits and mandatory reporting guidelines

I am available to address any and all concerns regarding student safety. Trust that we put the best interest of all our children at the forefront every day and fully recognize the uneasiness and uncertainty these allegations of gross misconduct have caused the BHCS and greater community.

Please contact me directly to discuss details of BHCS policies and procedures regarding the current situation.

Sincerely,

Ann Marie Pumphrey  
Head of School

For matters specific to this incident contact The Cleveland Division of the FBI at 216.622.6842.

To report any abuse of a minor, immediate contact should be made with local civil authorities and with the Diocese of Toledo's Victim Assistance Coordinator who can be reached at 419-244-6711, ext. 4880 in the Toledo calling area, or 1-800-926-8277, ext. 4880 (Outside Toledo, Within Ohio).

Sacred Heart Campus (PreK-5th)

500 Smith Road, Fremont OH, 43420  
419-332-7102

[www.bishop-hoffman.net](http://www.bishop-hoffman.net)

SJCC Campus (6th-12th)

702 Croghan Street, Fremont OH, 43420  
419-332-9947