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## **PRESS RELEASE**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Hamilton, Ontario, Wednesday, October 12, 2011 –

The Diocese of Hamilton notes the proceedings of the Criminal Court regarding the pending charge of sexual assault against Rev. José Silva by a young adult male.

Fr. Silva has been, and will continue to be impeded in the public exercise of his religious duties while this serious matter is *"sub judice"*. The conditions of his release on surety entail restrictions on his freedom of movement and association. Since he is unable to serve the parish of Santa Maria for the foreseeable future, he has presented his resignation as Pastor to the Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton so that appropriate pastoral provision can be made for this busy downtown faith community. Fr. Silva has further indicated that he no longer wishes to remain in pastoral ministry in this country and will be in consultation with his own Superior, Bishop Juarez Sousa da Silva, of Oeiras, Brazil.

Bishop Crosby has accepted this resignation and will proceed to the appointment of an interim administrator for the Parish. The Bishop of Oeiras, Brazil, has been advised of the current situation and shall attend to Fr. Silva's future situation once a court adjudication has been determined.

Msgr. Vincent Kerr, Chancellor of the Diocese of Hamilton said:

"The issue of the criminal charge against Fr. Silva is one which can only be dealt with by due process of law and one can only hope that justice will be done and be seen to be done quickly. I am only too aware of the disruption which has been caused in the normal routine of parish life at Santa Maria. I have encouraged parishioners to behave with dignity and restraint and not to engage in second-guessing the judicial process - however protracted that may prove to be. Accuser and accused enjoy their respective rights before the tribunals of our Canadian Justice system and speculation serves little purpose when a matter must be decided on facts and due process.

In the wake of Fr. Silva's resignation as Pastor, I shall be in contact with the Parish staff and Parish Council to ensure that the worship schedule is covered in these next few weeks and then to consider the matter of finding a suitable replacement for the longer term. It has been my privilege to be able to have been of some support to the Portuguese community of the city in filling in at Masses and I express my concern and encouragement for them in what has been a traumatizing few weeks".