

Diocese of Venice statement of May 27, 2014

Bishop Frank J. Dewane and the Diocese of Venice in Florida take seriously all letters of inquiry.

By any definition, this letter - maliciously sent to the media even though the authors demanded confidentiality - remains anonymous and as such, in professional circles lack all credibility. Prior to the media posting the contents of the letter, no letter from any source was received by the Diocese or Bishop Dewane on the topic or contents that have been identified by the media.

The contents of the letter are sweeping generalities and are simply false and unfounded.

Bishop Dewane continues to be open, as Shepherd of the Diocese, to speaking to any priests of the Diocese on matters of concern to them. In fact, Bishop Dewane regularly meets with priests and laity both in and out of the office on a variety of topics related to pastoral needs. In addition, Bishop Dewane conducts a rigorous pastoral schedule visiting parishes, schools and charitable outreach sites throughout the 10-county Diocese where he can be approached by anyone attending these events.

A process exists for the priests of the Diocese of Venice to express their concerns to Bishop Dewane. The Vicar for Priests serves as a liaison between the priests and the Bishop. In addition, each area of the Diocese – known as a Deanery – has a Dean, a representative priest from the area whose task is to relay any pastoral concerns or issues to the Bishop. There exist multiple channels whereby priests can express concerns.

Having first seen the contents of the letter on a media website, it is concerning that while on two occasions the authors themselves demand confidentiality, they in fact leaked the contents to the media. This is a clear attempt to maliciously and publically damage the reputation of Bishop Dewane and the Diocese of Venice. With the general nature of

the unfounded complaints in the letter that was released, one has to wonder who is being bullied by whom?