The Roman Catholic Archdiocese *of* Washington
Post Office Box 29260, Washington, DC 20017-0260

Office of the Archbishop

Tuesday 4 October, 2022

Dear Holy Cross Parish and School Community,

As you are aware, last Friday, September 30, 2022, the Archdiocese shared the difficult and painful information that an allegation of sexual abuse of minors has been made involving Reverend Robert P. Buchmeier. This alleged incident is reported to have occurred in another diocese decades ago, prior to Father Buchmeier's ordination to the priesthood.

Every revelation of an allegation of sexual abuse causes despair and heartbreak; however, as Psalm 34 assures us: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted, those whose spirit is crushed he will save." (Psalm 34:19). The Church has experienced far too many such allegations in recent years. As your shepherd it is both my privilege and my duty to accompany you during this difficult moment. I also urge you to refrain from making any judgments about Father Buchmeier or those bringing forward these allegations.

I will be at Holy Cross Catholic Church on Wednesday, October 5, 2022 at 6:00 pm, to pray and participate in an open dialogue with you. I invite you to join me and members of the archdiocesan staff in the church for prayer, followed by a facilitated question-and-answer session, and concluding with Mass.

Due to the sensitive nature of our conversation, children should not attend this prayer service and discussion. Childcare will be available for those who wish to attend. Please reach out to the school principal, Mrs. Lisa Kane, to make arrangements.

Be assured that Holy Cross Church and The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington take very seriously our responsibility to protect the precious children entrusted to our care. We are fully cooperating with the investigation by civil authorities, and we are complying with the Child Protection and Safe Environment Policy.

I encourage anyone with information that may be helpful in this investigation to contact the Alexandria Police Department, Criminal Investigations Division, at 703-746-4444. Furthermore, if at any time you become aware of improper conduct by anyone in archdiocesan ministry, please contact Courtney Chase, Executive Director of the Archdiocese's Office of Child Protection & Safe Environment, at 301-853-5302.

Please keep in your prayers all who have been affected by this painful situation.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

✠Wilton Cardinal Gregory,
Archbishop of Washington