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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DIOCESAN STATEMENT ON SAINT ROSE PASTORAL CHANGE:

On July 2, 2007, three members from Saint Rose Parish in Perrysburg presented Bishop Blair with a copy of an e-mail from a private individual, whose name and other information were withheld, and a copy of a letter from SNAP. These two documents, alleging misconduct by Father David Nuss, were dated respectively April 23 and April 24, 2007. Bishop Blair was told that these documents had been sent to him on these dates. However, neither the Bishop nor any one in his office ever received the e-mail, which had an incorrect e-mail address, or the letter.

In January 2007 Father Nuss reported to Bishop Blair that he had entered into a consensual but inappropriate relationship the previous Fall with a woman his age outside the Diocese of Toledo. In the January report, Father Nuss explained that he had ended the relationship out of recognition that it was immoral and totally incompatible with his priestly promise, and he expressed directly to the Bishop his deep regret, genuine contrition for what he did and earnest desire to live and serve as a priest. While he is keenly aware that his actions were sinful, hurtful of others, and unacceptable for a priest, in no way was the relationship civilly unlawful.

In light of all that happened at Saint Rose Parish regarding the appointment of a new pastor, it would not have been right to subject the parishioners to further controversy at this time.

Having expressed his sincere sorrow and having renounced his actions, Father Nuss, like every other person, should not be denied the mercy and forgiveness that we all need from God and from one another. Father Nuss has fully cooperated with the Bishop's guidance and instruction to seek all the spiritual and human helps necessary to avoid this sin. Father Nuss remains a priest with all the faculties to exercise his priestly ministry in the Diocese of Toledo. The Bishop intends to grant him a brief sabbatical to which he is entitled by his years of ordination, and then assign him to pastoral ministry.

Father Nuss is deeply sorry for the pain his actions have caused the woman involved, his brother priests and the Catholic people, and he seeks their forgiveness as well.

The Diocese of Toledo, established April 15, 1910 encompasses 8222 square miles in a mixture of urban and rural areas that spans 19 counties across Northwest Ohio, serving 309,828 Catholics. The diocese includes Allen, Crawford, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood and Wyandot counties.

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April 24, 2007

Claudia Yvonne Vercellotti
Co-Director, SNAP Toledo Chapter
P.O. Box 9851
Toledo, Ohio 43697

Bishop Leonard Blair
1933 Spielbusch Avenue
Toledo, Ohio 43624

Dear Bishop Blair,

We are writing in response to the recent troubling email sent to you, carbon copied to me, regarding Fr. David Nuss. If any of this is accepted as true, clearly, this would violate the spirit if not the letter of the Dallas Charter. It also would violate your own diocesan policy, even as loosely as that is enforced.

We know your office announced that Fr. Nuss would no longer be the Vocation's Director but amid a priest shortage, was not immediately re-assigned. This email makes us wonder if you already have had prior knowledge of its contents and if there is a correlation between his removal as Vocation's Director and these allegations. Is there?

Our primary concern is for the grieving widow and her vulnerable kids and their well being. Secondary, is the fact that if any of this is accepted as true then this sounds like the same methodology used by sexual predators to "groom" victims. Our concern is that if any of this is to be accepted as true, then what is to stop Fr. Nuss from exploiting another vulnerable person in crisis?

We spoke at length with the author of this email and it's the exacting details that are the most troubling.

We are writing to ask that you investigate these allegations timely, with sensitivity and care that to date, you have failed to employ. If there is any merit to these allegations and we strongly suspect that there will be – please remove Fr. Nuss, provide unfettered assistance to the victims and ensure that no one else is harmed.

Bishop Blair, you have failed us as a survivor community time and time again, giving deference to child molesting clerics, secrecy and cover-up, even in the murder of Sr. Pahl. It is for those reasons; we will continue to pray for you, that you start exercising the much needed moral leadership within this diocese so that no other person needlessly suffers. How many more people, including kids will have to suffer before you do so?

We have a difficult time imagining Jesus casting aside so many, for the dirty secrets of so few. When is enough, enough?

If we can provide anything further, please contact us at 419-350-9234.

Sincerely,

Claudia Yvonne Vercellotti
Co-Director, SNAP Toledo Chapter

From: [REDACTED]

To: lblair@toledodiocese.com

Cc: Snaptoledo@aol.com

Subject: Fr. David Nuss

Date: Mon, 23 Apr 2007 1:44 pm

Dear Bishop Blair:

This correspondence is to inform you of a situation that needs to be brought to your attention. One year ago, on [REDACTED], 2006 my dear friend lost her husband, suddenly [REDACTED]. That week Fr. Nuss had the funeral mass. As you can imagine my friend, only [REDACTED] years old and a widow with [REDACTED] young children, was devastated. Her emotional state to say the least was extremely weak and fragile. From approximately the date of the funeral through mid February, Fr. David Nuss, decided that it would be in his best interest to sexually exploit my girlfriend, over and over again with her. He also befriended all [REDACTED] children and made everyone feel comfortable and protected and provided the very needed male relationship in all of their lives. He told my friend that he wanted to leave the priesthood and was unhappy with his life. I knew all along that he was a phony, but my friend hung on his every word and action. Yesterday was the year anniversary and my friend's [REDACTED] year old son asked why Father Dave did not send him a card or call to see how he was doing. She basically answered that Fr. Dave is not the priest everyone thought that he was. Incidentally, he was supposed to take this boy on a road-trip to see several professional baseball fields and games, this summer. To make a long story short, the emotions became so elevated and the relationship ended. I have much evidence, as I am sure that he will deny the whole incident. If he does not deny it, then good for him but other people have the right to be warned of his failure to hold himself to the higher and holier standard of a priest. I am aware that he has done nothing criminal, but morally he has failed miserably. Please contact me at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter.

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