



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
church of phoenix

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January 10, 2008

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In response to a number of form letters that the chancery offices have received from parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes and Prince of Peace Parishes, I have come to believe that it is critical that I assure you of the Diocese of Phoenix's support for your pastor, Fr. David Ostler.

As most of you know, Fr. Ostler was incardinated as a priest of the Diocese of Phoenix in February, 2005. Before a priest is incardinated, the Diocese has an extensive process that thoroughly checks the priest's background. Before Fr. Ostler's incardination, it was made known to us that there were allegations about him that were posted on the internet. I wish to assure you that those allegations were thoroughly investigated and have been found to be without merit. Anyone who disseminates information about these allegations, with knowledge that they are false, is guilty of the sin of calumny.

Fr. Ostler continues to be a priest in good standing of the Diocese of Phoenix and has been assigned by Bishop Olmsted as pastor of the joint parish of Our Lady of Lourdes and Prince of Peace with all of the rights and obligations that Canon Law provides.

It is important to note that, Bishop Olmsted respects the rights of members of the faithful to bring legitimate concerns about the ministry or conduct of priests to his attention. At the same time, he will defend the integrity of any priest serving in the Diocese from unsubstantiated or anonymous complaints. If there is a key principle that he seeks to uphold, it is that of justice. Both members of the laity and clergy have rights and obligation as members of the Church. These rights will be respected by any process of complaint resolution.

Fr. Ostler has demonstrated his love for God and God's people by the commitment of his life in service as a priest. I encourage you to support him in his challenging role as your pastor. If, in his human weakness, there are examples of any failure on his part, I encourage you to treat him with charity and the respect due him and if necessary, make positive use of the process that exists to deal with substantive complaints. Anyone who is promoting unsubstantiated allegations against Fr. Ostler needs to cease that behavior immediately, for it is contrary to the life that we share in Christ.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. James S. Wall".

Rev. James S. Wall
Vicar of Priests