



November 24, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with profound regret that I write to you regarding an incident that took place on Sunday evening between Father Charles Smith and Father Paul Eversole, resulting in injury to Father Eversole. Neither man has a history of violent behavior; rather, a simple disagreement escalated quickly. Both have since expressed concern and wish that this had never happened. I am working with them to ensure that the proper legal, medical and spiritual measures are taken.

I understand that this distressing news comes as a shock to you, as it did to me. But we must remember that our priests are human, with faults and shortcomings like the rest of us. And while we should always respond in a manner that recognizes their innate dignity and offer understanding, this type of behavior necessarily has consequences. As the diocese continues to pursue the matter, Father Smith is no longer assigned as parochial vicar at Our Lady of Angels. A decision regarding his future assignment will be made once the situation is resolved. Father Eversole will remain as pastor of your parish and area priests will assist in celebrating Masses and hearing confessions until a new parochial vicar is appointed.

Given the sensitivity of the situation and the fact that both priests need time to renew and recover, I ask you to please respect their privacy. During this time of transition, I also ask that you join me in prayer for those involved and those affected, that they may receive pardon, healing and peace.

Faithfully in Christ,

*+ Paul S. Loverde*

Bishop Paul S. Loverde