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Rev. Ronald J. Hopmeir, Pastor

Dear Parishioners, School Families, Coaches, and Organization Heads,

None of us wants to live in panic mode, but in light of this week's tragic incident at Central Visual & Performing Arts High School, we are strongly reminded of the importance of our doors being closed and locked after normal school hours. **Be assured that our entrances are secure and diligently attended to during the school day.** It is during our after-hours activities when doors continue to be propped open on a regular basis.

Sadly, in this world we're living in, door-propping is becoming more than just an ongoing annoyance for those responsible for the security of our campus and preventing damage to property. For the same reasons that a door is propped open – no one is near it nor can hear it – an intruder can enter unbeknownst to anyone. There are plenty of places to hide in buildings of this size.

The temptation to prop the doors is understandable. Coaches are busy setting up for practice, or practice has started and there are stragglers. No one is near the door nor can they hear someone knocking. So an object – handheld stop sign, traffic cone, bunched up floor mat -- is placed between the double doors to keep them from closing.

Admittedly, it is inconvenient and a hassle to have to stand by the door until all have arrived to your practice or meeting. In order to help out in this department, we are making some upgrades, which should be complete before December 1:

- We are installing an after-hours bell at the main entrance to the Parish Center, which will ring and flash a strobe light inside the Parish Center (gym).
- We are installing an after-hours bell at the handicap door, which will ring and flash a strobe light inside the Parish Hall.
- We are upgrading the bell currently on the flagpole door to flash a strobe in the cafeteria.

These bells and lights will enable you to start your meeting or practice while still being alerted when a latecomer has arrived and needs to be let in.

We do not want to revoke gym or meeting-space privileges, but if doors continue to be propped open and unattended, we are at a loss as to how to keep the building secure in the hours when no one from the parish or school administration is present to make sure it is so. (For public events, we schedule the doors to be unlocked for a specified period of time.)

The safety of our students, families, and parishioners – and secondarily the well-being of our property – are things we all want. Please help us ensure that all entrances remain locked during your practices and meetings. **Coaches and organization leaders: What can we do to make this easier for you? We are open to your ideas.**

In the meantime, if we become aware of doors being propped, we will have no choice other than to deactivate access cards and kindly ask you to meet or practice elsewhere. We all owe it to our students, their families, and our parishioners to guarantee that our building meets the safety standards we are promising them.

Thank you all for sharing your time and talent with this community. All that you do is appreciated, including your cooperation in this effort.

Peace,

Father Ron Hopmeir, Pastor

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