

ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC
NEWMAN CENTER
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

October 7, 2009

Native American House
c/o Professor Robert Warrior
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To all students and staff of the Native American House, the AIS program, and other participants in the *Not Our Mascot* rally,

I was horrified to watch the video of 13 of our students antagonizing the participants of the *Not Our Mascot* march. St. John's Catholic Newman Center embraces the belief of the Roman Catholic Church that all people are made in the image and likeness of God, and thus are entitled to enjoy the respect that corresponds with their inherent dignity. I consider it a blessing to be part of a campus community and Catholic community that is culturally diverse. I experience this blessing every day amongst the priests—of Filipino-Chinese, Spanish-Panamanian, African, and Caucasian descent—with whom I live and serve at St. John's.

Please know that, as an institution, St. John's Catholic Newman Center is 100% anti-racism. The resident advisors of Newman Hall have participated in the racial diversity program of the University and our freshmen have been encouraged to participate in the I-Connect Diversity Workshop. However, given the size of the community of young adults we serve—580 residents of a variety of religious backgrounds as well as the other 10,000 Catholic students on campus—and the diversity of perspectives and attitudes therein, we are incapable of determining the degree to which our members actively reflect the values in our teaching and preaching. Our ministry aims at giving witness in our words and actions to the inviolable dignity of each and every human person, from conception to natural death. We also aim to practice Christian hospitality, as our programs and our Center are open to any and all individuals of the campus community who seek a place for prayer, study, or fellowship.

I adamantly apologize for the behavior of the students involved and have taken measures to correct it. If you have any further concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Be assured of my prayers and best wishes.

Sincerely,



Monsignor Gregory K. Ketcham
Director and Head Chaplain