

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS CONFERENCE

BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
UNITED STATES-TORONTO REGION



December 4, 2009

Franc Cardinal Rodé, C.M.
Palazzo della Congregazioni
Piazza Pio XII, 3
00193
Roma. ITALY

Your Eminence:

The Regional Conference of the Christian Brothers of the United States and Toronto Region wish to express our strong support for the communities of women religious of North America and to call for greater transparency in the Apostolic Visitation process.

The Brothers conduct 100 ministries in the United States, including 56 secondary schools, seven universities, and several elementary schools and child care and retreat centers within the Church. In many of these ministries we have worked closely with countless sisters from a wide variety of congregations. We have nothing but the greatest respect for the dedication and service to the Church provided by women religious. Their generosity, creativity, and willingness to serve the varied needs of God's people are an inspiration to us as fellow religious men and co-workers in the Church.

We have serious concerns about the process of the Apostolic Visitation. It has created much anxiety for the Sisters who have served the American Church so well. We sincerely hope and advocate that the process will be transparent and open for the mutual benefit of the Church as well as the Sisters involved.

It is safe to say that the Catholic school system and much of the health care system in the United States would not exist today were it not for the courageous and sacrificing spirit of so many religious women over so many years and in so many challenging situations. There is no doubt in our minds that women religious in the United States have been and continue to be a profound blessing for our church and nation.

We close with these words of John Paul II to the Bishops of Nigeria on their "Ad Limina" visit in April 2002: "Dear Brothers, Shepherds of God's Holy People, it is of the utmost importance that *openness, honesty and transparency should always be the hallmark of everything that the Church does, in all her spiritual, educational and social undertakings, as well as in every aspect of her administration.*"

Sincerely,

Brother Francis Carr, FSC
President
Regional Conference of Christian Brothers
United States-Toronto Region

Brother Robert Schieler, FSC
General Councilor
Brothers of the Christian Schools