



MEDIA ADVISORY

Diocese of Laredo

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TO: All Media
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DIOCESAN STATEMENT REGARDING THE RETIREMENT **OF FATHER JOSE LUIS BALDERAS**

It has come to our attention that there has recently been much misinformation posted on social media regarding the pending retirement of Fr. Jose Luis Balderas from the Parish of Christ the King in Laredo. Fr. Anthony Mendoza, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Laredo, has issued the following corrections to that misinformation:

1. Fr. Balderas is not 75, but will turn 77 years old next month (December, 2018).
2. Since at least the time Fr. Balderas became a diocesan priest for the Diocese of Laredo, through the present time, his parishes have been paying an allowance for his Social Security Account. His parishes have also been paying into the Diocesan Priest Pension Fund (first in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, then in the Diocese of Laredo). I do not know when Fr. Balderas started receiving his Social Security checks, but he should have started receiving them at least by the age of 70. When he was 70 he also started receiving checks from the Priest Pension Fund of the Diocese of Laredo. He will continue to receive those monthly checks as long as he lives.
3. All diocesan priests in full-time ministry are paid a monthly salary by their parishes. As in any other occupation, they are encouraged to save some of their salary to supplement their retirement. Since most of a priest's living expenses are paid by their church, priests are able to save money for their retirement.

4. By the law of the Catholic Church, all pastors are required to submit their retirement to the bishop at the age of 75. This is true even when a priest wants to continue working full-time administering a parish after the age of 75. In the case of Fr. Balderas, Bishop Tamayo allowed him to continue working at Christ the King Church for very close to two full years after he turned 75.

5. In the past few years, as Vicar General of the Diocese of Laredo, I have talked to Fr. Balderas several times about his plans for retirement. Each time, he told me that he wanted to retire at the Priest Retirement Home in San Antonio, which he said he could do since he worked many years for the Archdiocese of San Antonio. If he is not able to do so, or if he has changed his mind, then the Diocese of Laredo will help him to find a place to live. We currently have several retired priests living in Laredo, either in their own home or in a friend's home or in a church rectory. We also have a priest who is very limited in where he can work because of poor health, so he is living in a house which is owned by the diocese. These are all possibilities for Fr. Balderas after he leaves Christ the King later this week. He will certainly not be left with no place to live.

6. As with all retired priests, Fr. Balderas will be able to help at different parishes whenever he is needed, and those parishes will compensate him for his help.