MEMORANDUM

TO: All Pastors and Principals
FROM: Diocese Legal Office and Office of Education
RE: Bingo and Service/Volunteer Requirements for Reduced Tuition
DATE: May 4, 2006

For at least twenty years the Legal Office, Office of Education, and Finance Office of the Diocese have consistently educated and informed pastors and principals regarding the illegality of compensating in any way the individuals who administer or assist with bingo. Despite this oft repeated and very clear message, several schools have recently received phone calls from the Ohio Attorney General’s Office requesting information regarding the schools’ tuition policy and requesting copies of the schools’ service/volunteer policies or contracts with parents based on information that Office has received indicating that parents at these schools are receiving reduced tuition in exchange for “volunteering” at bingo.

We at the Diocese are very aware of the difficulty time parishes and schools have in getting volunteers to work bingo. Regardless, it should not have to be stated that this can never be an excuse to disobey the law. More than ever before, the Attorney General’s Office is taking very seriously its role in enforcing the state’s gambling and bingo laws. Given these recent investigations by the Attorney General’s Office it is clear that violations of this type will not be ignored and that Catholic churches and schools are not immune from the consequences of such violations. The bottom line is that violations of the gambling and bingo law can and do result in very negative consequences, including the revocation bingo licenses as well as criminal penalties that could include fines and even jail sentences.

In light of all this we will repeat once again the message we have been conveying for now for several decades: COMPENSATING BINGO WORKERS, WHETHER FINANCIALLY OR OTHERWISE, IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED BY LAW. This prohibition includes the following practices:

- Giving tuition rebates or in any way reducing a student’s tuition in any amount as a result of his or her parent(s) working bingo.
- Imposing a sanction, increasing tuition, or charging “full tuition” for any student whose parent(s) do not work bingo.
- Including bingo on the list of service or volunteer options available to parents in order to either receive a reduced tuition rate or to avoid increased tuition or a penalty.

Again, to be absolutely clear, the prohibitions described above are the law. They are not restrictions imposed by the Diocese that can be ignored without risking very real consequences but are legal mandates imposed by the State of Ohio that carry with them the very real possibility of criminal sanctions against schools and the individuals who administer them.