



# THE ARCHDIOCESE OF AGANA

CHANCERY OFFICE

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## Message from the Apostolic Administrator regarding the case of Msgr. James Benavente

First of all, I would like to reiterate the position made public in my press conference on July 27, 2016, namely, to recant and to retract all the statements released previously from the Archdiocese that have put a cloud over the name of Msgr. Benavente and compromised his right to due process.

Secondly, in the beginning of July, I instituted a process in which Msgr. Benavente was allowed to present his response to the allegations of some irregularities in the administration of temporary goods of the Church. I also instructed our Delegate to the Apostolic Administrator, Fr. Jeff San Nicolas to coordinate the process by involving different parties concerned.

Having examined all the documents and reports made available to me, I hereby declare that Msgr. Benavente's response is found both credible and satisfactory and that none of these alleged major irregularities should be held valid. It is clear that these alleged irregularities constituted the cause of the decision to remove him from the offices as Rector of the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica, Director of the Catholic Cemeteries, and to dissolve the Archdiocesan Development Group. I, thus, declare that the decision of his removal be considered invalid and any statement released from the Archdiocese against him or any of his staff in this matter ought to be considered invalid.

Obedient to his Ordinary at the time, Msgr. Benavente submitted himself to his decision and accepted an assignment as Parochial Vicar of St. Anthony's Church.

In light of the above, and in consultation with the Presbyteral Council and Msgr. Benavente, I have come to the decision that he be given another appointment.

It is my earnest wish that we all may learn a lesson from this matter in view of promoting due vigilance over the administration, linear clarity in policy, and fraternal communication among the clergy.

+ Savio Hon Tai Fai, SDB  
Apostolic Administrator  
Archdiocese of Agana