

**Parish Attestation/Representation Letter**

RE: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or Print Name of Parish, City or Other Institution)

Dear Bishop:

Enclosed is a copy of the \_\_\_\_\_ fiscal year annual report for the parish or other institution named above. As its Pastor/Administrator/business manager or bookkeeper, one of our primary duties is to be a good steward of the resources that have been entrusted to us in service of God’s people. The attached annual report is an all-inclusive report accounting for our receipts and expenditures, loans and savings for the past year.

In making this report we personally, to the best of our knowledge and with due diligence, attest to the following and acknowledge our responsibility for it:

1. All accounts (bank or otherwise) and investments of or holding parish funds are listed in this report, including Mass offering/stipend and auxiliary organization accounts. All account titles include the parish name and match the name on file with the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN#) issued to the parish. The Pastor / Administrator is a signatory on all accounts.
2. There has not been and is no commingling of personal and parish/school/institutional funds.
3. The Internal Control Self-Assessment Questionnaire has been completed and it accurately represents the internal controls in effect.
4. All known accounts and investments are under EIN# \_\_\_\_\_.

The above items 1-4 are hereby attested to by the Pastor/Administrator/business manager or bookkeeper:

Pastor/Administrator _____	/	
Print/Type Name		Signature

Business Manager/Bookkeeper _____	/	
Print/Type Name		Signature

5. To the best of our knowledge and belief, the annual financial report, including the accompanying schedules, is an accurate and complete accounting of our finances including all revenue, expense, saving, investment, and loan balances.
6. We are not aware of any instances of loss by fraud or theft in the past year, except for those which have already been reported to the diocesan Internal Audit Department, if any.
7. That the annual budget for the next fiscal year was made available to parishioners on \_\_\_\_\_(date).
8. That periodic financial statements (including, but not limited to a Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) and Statement of Activities (Income Statement)) were made available to parishioners at least annually, as follows:

<u>Date of Financial Statement</u>	<u>Date Issued to Parishioners</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. There is an active Finance Council in place that meets at least quarterly to discuss and review actual and budgeted financial results, the internal controls of the parish, and all expenditures greater than \$25,000.

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10. Meetings of the Finance Council during the above period, and since the end of the period, were held on the following dates:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

11. We hereby affirm that the parish has complied with the following provisions for internal controls:

- A. Communicate to employees and volunteers and implement a system of internal controls and a program of internal control review for the parish as outlined in the Diocese of Buffalo Business Administration Best Parish Practices manual. The program of internal control review shall be a structured, continuing and well-documented system designed to identify internal control weaknesses, identify actions that are needed to correct these weaknesses, monitor the implementation of necessary corrective actions and periodically assess the adequacy of the parish's internal controls.
- B. Make available to each employee and volunteer of the parish the Diocese of Buffalo Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan which the employee and volunteer of the parish shall be expected to comply to emphasize the importance of and responsibility for effective internal controls. All employees and volunteer who handle cash should review and sign. These signed copies should be retained in the parish office.
- C. Designate an internal control coordinator (Finance Council member), who shall report to the Finance Council, to implement and review the Internal Control Self-Assessment Questionnaire responsibilities. Controls should be periodically tested by the coordinator and the results reported to the Finance Council
- D. Implement education and training efforts to ensure that employees and volunteers within such parish have achieved adequate awareness and understanding of internal control standards and, as appropriate, evaluation techniques.

12. We are responsible for programs and controls consistent with the current diocesan policies in accordance with the Diocese of Buffalo Business Administration Best Parish Practices "Financial Governance, Reporting and Controls" manual. We represent we have reviewed the attached Internal Control Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Addendum A), and have tested at least twelve internal controls at random within the past fiscal year. Any exceptions to these representations are noted on the attached page.

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The above items 5-12 are hereby affirmed to by the Trustees and members of the Parish Finance Council:

TRUSTEES:

<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Signature</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS:

<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Signature</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Trustees and/or Finance Council members may individually or as a group qualify any of the above affirmation items 5-12 if they believe it is necessary based on information made available to them or the lack of information to sufficiently carry out their responsibilities. The following exceptions are made:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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In making this report it is understood by the undersigned and all parish Trustees and Finance Council members signing this report that parish Trustees and Finance Council members shall have no legal liability for a defalcation with the exception of any individual found to be complicit in such defalcation. As used in this report the term “complicit” shall mean aid and abetting the defalcation and/or having knowledge of a defalcation and failing to report it to the diocesan Internal Audit Department or to take action to prevent it and/or to engage in gross negligent conduct such that such conduct permitted the defalcation to occur.

Additionally, parish Trustees and Finance Council members are covered by the Diocese of Buffalo Directors and Officers Liability Insurance provided they have not been complicit in such defalcation.

Sincerely yours,

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Pastor / Administrator Signature

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Date