



# THE ARCHDIOCESE OF AGANA

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Lately a campaign of public and vicious attacks against the Shepherd of the local Catholic Church has been organized. In order to protect the faith of the Catholic people of Guam and safeguard the truth, the following statement is being made for immediate media release to the faithful and for the good willed people of our island.

For the past three years the Catholic Church in Guam has been constantly targeted by a series of lies destined to undermine the authority of the Archbishop. In order to help the People understand the defamatory nature of these attacks, let us review the series of intentional and malicious lies that have been spread by the media:

1. They began with the lie that the archbishop had *alienated* the property of Yona where the Redemptoris Mater seminary and the *Blessed Diego Luis San Vitores Theological Institute* are located; this accusation proved completely false and ridiculous when the title deed of property was released, listing the Archdiocese of Agana as the sole owner of property.
2. They proceeded then to claim that the archbishop had lost control of the corporation sole because in the *Board of Guarantors* he had only one vote against 4: also this proved completely false by the Articles of Incorporation where it is written that the *Board of Guarantors* is concerned only with *guaranteeing the purpose of the corporation* – which is that of forming priests (*Articles of Incorporation*, Art. XI) - while the “*Archbishop of Agana of the Roman Catholic Church, he is charged with the administration of the temporalities and the management of the estates and properties*” (*Articles of Incorporation*, Art. XII (iii)).
3. They proceeded then to assert that the corporation is not a *corporation sole* and therefore the archbishop would not be the *sole member* with total power to appoint or dismiss directors and guarantors: also this proved completely false as per Art. VI of the Articles of Incorporation: not only the archbishop is the *sole member* but he can dissolve the corporation and all the corporation’s assets shall be destined for whatever uses he may decide (Art.V (3)).
4. They moved then to even suggest that the *Blessed Diego Luis San Vitores Theological institute* for Oceania is not really affiliated with the *Pontifical Lateran University* - allegation proved completely absurd since all the documents of the *Lateran University* proving the affiliation are available.
5. All during this time they have unbelievably claimed that the Neocatechumenal Way is not Catholic but it is a sect – an allegation that cannot even be considered given the approval of Way given by five Popes and by the fact that there are Redemptoris Mater Seminaries in 105 dioceses of the world, among them one in Manila, one in Seoul, one in Taiwan, three in India, plus Rome, Boston and in about 25 other dioceses governed by cardinals.
6. Finally they have complained that the Archbishop is not available to people: everybody in good faith knows that the archbishop is celebrating almost every night confirmations in different parishes, visiting schools and celebrating on Saturdays or Sundays in different parishes. In every one of these visits he has always been

completely available to people. The proper forum for the Archbishop to speak is from his cathedra in the cathedral, during his pastoral visits or through a pastoral letter.

Seeing their incapacity of proving anything and the evident falsity of their claims and that their only recourse are insults, calumnies and violence, they have now revealed their true intention: they have decided to attack directly our Archbishop with a full-page paid advertisements in the Guam Pacific Daily News, at a cost of thousands of dollars, seeking to insinuate criminal sexual abuse by the Shepherd of the Catholic Church. These ads were paid for by the Concerned Catholics of Guam (CCOG) according to media statements by Gregory Perez and, as admitted by Tim Rohr, with the intent to target specifically the Archbishop. This demonstrates that they have no proof to substantiate any allegations and that their purpose is to confuse and mislead the people or, even, to induce some to bring false testimony.

To these outlandish accusations Senator BJ Cruz added his voice saying that he allegedly “*overheard*” a conversation which supposedly occurred in 2010, six years ago, blaming the Archbishop for the approval of the same bill for which he, Senator Cruz himself, voted in favor: he approved those amendments for which he now blames the Archbishop! Moreover the amendments introduced in the 2010 bill were introduced by Sen Cruz himself since without them the bill was discriminatory because it specifically targeted only the Catholic Church and not all religious or educational Institutions.

The agenda behind these lies and calumnies unleashed upon the Catholic Church and its Shepherd is the removal of Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron. The Archbishop is the successor to the Apostles, elected by God through Pope St. John Paul II. For Guam, he is our Apostle, and as our Apostle, for over 30 years, not just the past 3 years, he has tirelessly served the Church of Guam. Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron fought against Abortion, Casino Gambling, legalization of marijuana and recognition of same sex unions, as marriage. It is clear that his efforts displeased many people whose interests are not for the common good of Guam, but for their own personal interests. He also erected two seminaries, the Redemptoris Mater seminary and the St. John Paul II seminary – providing for the future of the Church in Guam and also in other parts of the Pacific - and also a University-level *Theological Institute* where seminarians can study and which it is appreciated by many bishops in all the Pacific who are sending their seminarians to study here in Guam.

These malicious, insulting and calumnious attacks are using the media to publicly lynch and defame the Archbishop without any sense of Justice, Morality or common decency and disregarding the most elementary forms of justice or due process. They are based fundamentally upon insults and instilling hatred, ignorance and violence in the people. Whoever joins in this attack against our Catholic faith, our Catholic Church, is neither Catholic nor Christian; this kind of malice lacks the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

After keeping silent for long time, since those who are orchestrating this campaign are inducing people into scandal, confusion and grave errors with the malicious intent to injure he Archbishop, the Church in Guam and many other people who have been insulted and harassed, the Archdiocese of Agana is in the process of taking canonical measures with the Sacra Rota – the competent canonical tribunal – and filing civil lawsuit against those perpetrating these malicious lies.

Archbishop Anthony urges the faithful not to be afraid, and to stand for the truth and he asks for your prayers. May Our Lady Santa Marian Kamalen intercede for us all.