

Press Release



Diocese of Charlotte
1123 South Church St.
Charlotte, NC 28203

Contact: David Hains
Phone: (704)370.3336

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 18, 2016

Statement in Response to Administration's New Guidance Letter on Title IX Application from The Most Reverend Peter J. Jugis, Bishop of Charlotte

The Catholic Church consistently affirms the inherent dignity of each and every human person and advocates for the wellbeing of all people, particularly the most vulnerable. Especially at a young age and in schools, it is important that our children understand the depth of God's love for them and their intrinsic worth and beauty. Children should always be and feel safe and secure and know they are loved.

The guidance issued May 13 by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education that treats "a student's gender identity as the student's sex" is deeply disturbing. The guidance fails to address a number of important concerns and contradicts a basic understanding of human formation so well expressed by Pope Francis: that "the young need to be helped to accept their own body as it was created" (*Amoris Laetitia* [AL], no. 285).

Children, youth, and parents in these difficult situations deserve compassion, sensitivity, and respect. All of these can be expressed without infringing on legitimate concerns about privacy and security on the part of the other young students and parents. The federal regulatory guidance issued on May 13 does not even attempt to achieve this balance. It unfortunately does not respect the ongoing political discussion at the state and local levels and in Congress, or the broader cultural discussion, about how best to address these sensitive issues. Rather, the guidance short-circuits those discussions entirely.

As Pope Francis has recently indicated, "biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated" (AL, no. 56, emphasis added). We pray that the government make room for more just and compassionate approaches and policies in this sensitive area, in order to serve the good of all students and parents, as well as the common good. We will be studying the guidance further to understand the full extent of its implications.