

February 24, 2003

Very Reverend Monsignor Carl Kemme, VG
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Subject: Prohibition of the Use of 15-Passenger Vans by Diocesan Institutions

Federal studies, recently passed laws and the all-too-frequent fatal accidents raise concerns about the use of 15-passenger vans. Since 1990, 424 people have lost their lives in van rollover accidents and hundreds more have been seriously injured.

After conducting a study to analyze the rollover propensity of the vans, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a national warning to users of such vehicles. Our diocesan insurance office has previously shared these concerns with you in earlier monthly mailings.

For these reasons and our genuine concern for the safety of all those individuals we serve, it has been determined that it is necessary to issue a ban on their use. This includes the purchase, rental or borrowing of these vans for any diocesan activity. Arrangements for eliminating those vans already owned should be made as soon as you can. Included in this monthly mailing is the listing of these vans. Since models change from time to time, any van designed to hold more than nine passengers should be avoided.

I hope you will agree that this is a prudent decision and will cooperate fully in advising your staffs of this prohibition.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Very Reverend Monsignor Carl A. Kemme, VG
Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia