



St. Mary's International School

September 11, 2014

Dear St. Mary's Alumni,

You may be aware of recent reports in the media and online about allegations of sexual misconduct said to have occurred several decades ago at St. Mary's International School. In the spirit of transparency, I want to tell you what we know and ask for your help in uncovering the truth about what occurred. We want to make sure it doesn't happen again.

I became Head of School in August 2013. Five months later, in January 2014, I was informed that a former student had come forward in May 2013, with allegations against Brother Lawrence Lambert for an incident nearly 50 years ago. At the same time, I also learned that Brother Lambert had written a letter of apology to the former student after he came forward. As soon as I learned of this, we notified local police as well as the Catholic Archdiocese of Tokyo and turned over all material. I took steps to protect the students, including instructing Brother Lambert to have no contact with St. Mary's students, parents or staff. He has since moved and is no longer in Japan.

These are very disturbing allegations and we take this matter very seriously. We are outraged by the thought that any member of our community might have been harmed.

Since I learned about Brother Lambert's apology, additional allegations about incidents several decades ago have been raised in the media and online, accusing former members of our faculty and staff who are no longer at the school. At least one of the accused, Brother Benoit Lessard, is deceased. Nevertheless, these allegations are deeply troubling to all of us who work so hard each day to earn the trust of our students and to guide them in their spiritual development. We are trying to reach out to those who have come forward. We ask our community to join us in praying for them.

I have a very important request. If you have information about any person associated with SMIS harming any members of the school community, please share that information with me or with the authorities. I cannot stress enough how important this is, as we can only address concerns if we are made aware of them. That is why we are reporting everything we learn to the proper authorities – the local police and the Catholic Archdiocese of Tokyo – and cooperating fully with their investigations to determine the validity of any allegations.

Since becoming aware of these allegations, we have launched a full review of our school's safety policies, procedures and training to be certain we are doing everything we can to ensure our students' safety. We are reinforcing with all students the importance of boundaries and encouraging them to tell an adult if someone makes them feel uncomfortable. Additionally, we are providing our parents with resources to help them talk with their children in age-appropriate ways about setting boundaries and communicating about any inappropriate behavior.

We do everything we can to provide a safe learning environment for every one of our students at St. Mary's. That is our number one concern. We do not tolerate any form of abuse. We welcome



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suggestions from our community about any improvements we can make to prevent something like this from ever happening again.

I will update the SMIS community on this issue as we continue to learn more. In the meantime, please let me know your thoughts and concerns. You can call (81-3-3709-3411) or email me (headmaster@smis.ac.jp) to set up an appointment. I thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,

Saburo Kagei

Headmaster