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## Statement from Fr. Bobby Smith, Former CEO of Saint Francis Ministries

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### Statement from Fr. Bobby Smith

#### Former CEO of Saint Francis Ministries

December 22, 2020

In the weeks since I resigned from Saint Francis Ministries, I have intentionally sought to not engage in public discourse about all that has occurred.

While I am disheartened by inaccurate and uninformed reporting, I remain confident that my team and I were sincere in our efforts to transform Saint Francis into a nationally and internationally respected organization resembling its earliest missional context; one focused on the needs of vulnerable children and families regardless of geography. It is the value and integrity of my team's work, and not only my personal name that I will tirelessly defend.

Let me correct one of many gross errors that has been repeated in media reports: While I grew to respect and admire the depth of his intellect and expertise, I was never a personal, business partner with WMK Research President Bill Whymark.

One other instance that has been incorrectly reported are the circumstances surrounding my approval to purchase Chicago Cubs baseball tickets for use by the organization. In 2019, a Saint Francis benefactor offered a unique fundraising opportunity for post-season Chicago Cubs tickets: If Saint Francis would advance the \$65,000 for the post-season tickets, then Saint Francis could sell those tickets on the secondary ticket market, earning far more than the face value of the tickets alone. This was strictly a revenue opportunity, formalized by a legal contract between Saint Francis and the benefactor. Since the Cubs didn't make it to the play-offs, the \$65,000 payment was returned by the benefactor.

To transform an organization requires tireless effort and commitment. I accepted the demand of being on the road for days and weeks every month – travel that incurred thousands of dollars spent on airlines, hotels, meals and donor development activities.

I am proud of what our team of incredibly big-thinking and dedicated professionals accomplished in my 6.5 years at Saint Francis. I regret that with my resignation, the mission we started will not be fulfilled as originally envisioned.