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## CATHOLIC HOMES NEARING COMPLETION OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain is aware of a recent news article which stated that eight children's residential care homes have still not completed all of the requirements for full certification under The Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act. Among those four have been identified as Catholic residences.

According to the Act, the general requirements for certification include proof of qualified and competent management and staff; maintenance, health, security and safety approvals for the premises; welfare and adequate amenities and spaces for residents; food handling certificates, as well as adequate record keeping and reporting mechanisms.

The Office of the Archdiocese is assured that ahead of the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for certification, the Homes have continued to collaborate with the Children's Authority to satisfy outstanding requirements.

Of the four named Homes, Marian House, which was 85% complete, has since been audited and inspected. It now awaits staff training by the Fire Services to meet 100% of the requirements for certification. Mary Care House (South) which was 88% compliant, has also received approvals for a provisional Fire Certificate and is awaiting its license from the Fire Services.

The Lady Hochoy Home which was 79% compliant, has now been issued an extension from the Fire Service and is awaiting the renewal of its Public Health Certificate. The Cyril Ross Nursery which was also 79% compliant, is in the process of completing requirements for renewal of its Fire and Public Health Certificates. These are expected to be completed in the weeks ahead to fully satisfy the mandatory operational requirements.

There are 14 Catholic run children's Homes registered and operational in Trinidad and Tobago. They have been providing shelter, care and education to at-risk and vulnerable children. One of these has been in existence for over 150 years.

Yours in Christ

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