



DIOCESE OF COLORADO SPRINGS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 22, 2012

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On May 17, 2012, the El Paso County District Court issued an arrest warrant charging Father Robert Manning with alleged sexual assault on a minor by a person in a position of trust and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Father Manning is a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis who served as the Pastor of St. Gabriel Catholic Church in Colorado Springs from June 30, 2007 until January 23, 2012.

When the Diocese of Colorado Springs received the allegation against Father Manning on January 5, 2012, it immediately reported the matter to the police and promptly placed Father Manning on administrative leave. On January 18, Archbishop Carlson, the Archbishop of St. Louis, suspended Father Manning's faculties. The Diocese has fully cooperated with law enforcement and the Archdiocese of St. Louis. It is complying with its obligations under the Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

This is an extremely difficult situation for all. The alleged victim and family have, at all times in their communications with the Diocese, been polite and cooperative. Our hearts go out to them. Our hearts go out to all victims of abuse.

The Diocese of Colorado Springs has taken extraordinary care to ensure that its ministries are safe for those it serves. Its safe environment practices and protocols involve thousands of trainings and background checks, prompt reporting requirements, and more. We ask the faithful and all people of good will to pray for the alleged victim and family, for the parishioners and staff at St. Gabriel's, for the law enforcement officials, for the accused priest, and for all involved.

A process has now begun. As it goes forward, there should be compassion and care for the alleged victim. There should be a presumption of innocence for the priest. Both are entitled to due process.

Anyone with information regarding any allegations against Father Manning or any minister of the Catholic Church should contact the Diocesan Office of Mission Effectiveness, asking for Ed Gaffney (719-651-7742) or Terri Sortor (719-660-6073).

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