

NEWS RELEASE
The Diocese of Peoria, Illinois
January 22, 2009

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For Immediate Release

“CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA REQUESTS PRIEST TO NO LONGER FUNCTION IN PUBLIC MINISTRY”

Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C. of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria has asked Father Jerry Pilon, Pastor of St. Mary Church, Moline, Illinois, to step down from public ministry. Allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor were made against Pilon dating back to nearly twelve years ago. The alleged abuse did not take place in the Diocese of Peoria, and the victim was not a minor with whom he had served in any ministerial capacity. He has been asked not to function as a Catholic priest in any public capacity, to no longer wear clerical garb or the roman collar, and to refrain from using the title Reverend or Father. Pilon has denied the allegations and has claimed that he is innocent.

Pilon's assignments serving in the Diocese of Peoria include: Holy Family Church, Lincoln, St. Mary Church, Atlanta, and St. Columba Church, Mason City (1989-1991), Chaplain, Lincoln Correctional Center (1989), Holy Cross Church, Mendota, Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Peterstown (1991-1992), St. Anthony Church, Hoopeston (1992-1998), St. Mary Church, Moline (1998-current).

Under the direction of Bishop Jenky, the Catholic Diocese of Peoria remains committed to maintaining a safe environment for all children. The implementation of the Protecting God's Children program related to VIRTUS programs and the current safe environment program used within the Diocese, has made an important impact on the safety of the children in the Catholic faith communities throughout the 26 counties of the diocese.

Bishop Jenky continues to pray daily for all victims of sexual abuse and apologizes and prays that the Lord will heal the wounds resulting from this abuse. Bishop Jenky asks for the prayers of the faithful for all the individuals involved in this case and especially for the overwhelming majority of our priests and lay ministers whose zeal and holiness do so much to build up the body of Christ in Central Illinois.

At this time, out of respect for the privacy of the individuals involved in the case, the Catholic Diocese of Peoria will not be providing any further information.

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