

# Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Communication director's note: This press release was first posted on the Diocese of Raleigh website on 01/22/10. The suspended priest served in what is now the Diocese of Charlotte. The Diocese of Charlotte was established in 1972 from what was the western half of the Diocese of Raleigh.*

## Bishop Burbidge Suspends Priest

The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Raleigh, announced January 19, 2010 that he has suspended the priestly faculties of the Reverend Kenneth R. Parker. The action is the result of an allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor that dates back to 1982.

The Diocese received the allegation on Friday, November 13, 2009. Dr. John Pendergrass, Director of the Diocesan Office for Child and Youth Protection, and the Diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator met with the individual on that day. An offer to provide counseling for the individual was made at that time. Pursuant to the Diocesan Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Young People, Dr. Pendergrass informed the Chair of the Diocesan Review Board of the allegation on November 13, 2009. On Monday, November 16, 2009, Dr. Pendergrass reported the allegation to the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys, as outlined in the Diocesan Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Young People.

Fr. Parker was informed of the allegation on Monday, November 16, 2009. He denied the claim. The Diocese began the preliminary investigation into the allegation on November 16, 2009 in response to the allegation and in faithfulness to the obligations expressed in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (Essential Norms, 6)*. Upon completion of the preliminary investigation, the findings were presented to the Diocesan Review Board on January 15, 2010. The Review Board has the responsibility of evaluating results of the preliminary investigation and making a recommendation to the Bishop. On January 19, 2010, after receiving and accepting a recommendation from the Review Board, Bishop Burbidge informed Fr. Parker that his public priestly faculties were suspended.

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As required by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, the matter is now referred to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Holy See for the next steps in the judicial process.

Fr. Parker, 73, was ordained for the Priesthood for the Diocese of Raleigh May 25, 1965. He retired in 1993. In his retirement, he has provided temporary assistance to parishes during the period when pastors are on vacation. As with all priests, deacons, religious, lay employees and volunteers, Fr. Parker completed a background check which indicated no criminal record.

Fr. Parker's pastoral assignments have been: [Blue indicates a church within the Diocese of Charlotte](#)

- [June 10, 1965 - Missionary Apostolate, St. John Neumann, North Wilkesboro](#)
- [June 5, 1966 - Assistant Pastor, Our Lady of Grace Parish, Greensboro](#)
- [April 24, 1968 - Assistant Pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Charlotte](#)
- [May 8, 1968 - Administrator, St. Peter Parish, Charlotte](#)
- [June 10, 1968 - Pastor, Immaculate Conception, Forest City](#)
- Sept. 10, 1970 - Pastor, St. Catherine Parish, Tarboro
- May 1, 1974 - Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Whiteville
- July 5, 1979 - Pastor, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Newton Grove
- Jan. 8, 1985 - Pastor, St. Mary Mother of the Church Parish, Garner
- July 8, 1986 - Leave of Absence
- July 7, 1987 - Associate Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Pinehurst
- July 7, 1988 - Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Whiteville
- Sept. 1, 1993 - Retired

Bishop Burbidge has asked all the faithful in the Diocese of Raleigh to pray for all those involved during this difficult time.