

***THE FOLLOWING IS A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MICHAEL  
SALTARELLI:***

**DEAR PEOPLE OF HOLY SPIRIT PARISH,**

**I HAVE SOME VERY PAINFUL NEWS THIS MORNING.**

**THE DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD, IN A MEETING THIS PAST THURSDAY, REVIEWED ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FR. WIGGINS OF SEXUAL ABUSE INVOLVING MINORS IN EARLY 1987 AND FOUND THESE ALLEGATIONS TO BE CREDIBLE.**

**AS A RESULT, FR. WIGGINS HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY.**

**I KNOW THIS NEWS COMES AS A PAINFUL SHOCK TO THE HOLY SPIRIT COMMUNITY AS WELL AS THE LARGER DIOCESAN COMMUNITY.**

**I TRULY RECOGNIZE THE PAIN OF THIS SITUATION FOR YOU AS WELL AS FOR THE CHURCH WE LOVE. I AM COMMITTED TO YOUR HEALING AS A PARISH, TO THE HEALING OF ANY VICTIMS THAT MIGHT BE INVOLVED AND TO THE HEALING OF FR. WIGGINS HIMSELF.**

**I ASSURE YOU OF MY PRAYERS AND CONCERN DURING THESE VERY DIFFICULT DAYS. IT WAS MY WISH THAT YOU, THE PARISH COMMUNITY OF HOLY SPIRIT, BE TOLD DIRECTLY OF**

THIS NEWS BEFORE IT WAS RELEASED TO THE MEDIA THIS AFTERNOON.

I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP HOLY SPIRIT DEAL WITH THIS PAINFUL SITUATION WITH COMPASSION AND SENSITIVITY FOR THE ONGOING HEALING OF OUR PARISH AND CHURCH COMMUNITY.

I WILL JOIN MEMBERS OF MY STAFF, AND MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD INCLUDING JUDGE VINCENT BIFFERATO, DR. EILEEN SCHMITT AND MR. JUSTIN CARISIO TO MEET WITH PARISH LEADERSHIP TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION AND HOW BEST TO ADDRESS THE HEALING NEEDS OF OUR PARISH.

ONCE AGAIN, PLEASE BE ASSURED OF MY PRAYERS AS WE GO THROUGH THESE DIFFICULT TIMES TOGETHER. GOD BLESS YOU.

SINCERELY YOURS IN CHRIST,

BISHOP MICHAEL A. SALTARELLI

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

JANUARY 26, 2003

***THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS FROM BISHOP SALTARELLI:***

**DEAR PEOPLE OF CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH,**

**I HAVE SOME VERY PAINFUL NEWS THIS MORNING.**

**THE FORMER PASTOR OF CORPUS CHRISTI, FR. FRANCIS ROGERS, HAS RESIGNED FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY.**

**THE DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD, IN A MEETING THIS PAST THURSDAY, REVIEWED ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FR. ROGERS OF SEXUAL ABUSE INVOLVING MINORS IN THE EARLY 1980s AND FOUND THESE ALLEGATIONS TO BE CREDIBLE.**

**I RECOGNIZE THE PAIN OF THIS SITUATION FOR CORPUS CHRISTI, ITS PRIESTS AND PEOPLE AS WELL AS FOR THE CHURCH WE LOVE. I AM COMMITTED TO YOUR HEALING AS A PARISH, TO THE HEALING OF ANY VICTIMS THAT MIGHT BE INVOLVED AND TO THE HEALING OF FR. ROGERS HIMSELF.**

**I ASSURE YOU OF MY PRAYERS AND CONCERN DURING THESE VERY DIFFICULT DAYS. IT WAS MY WISH THAT YOU, THE PARISH COMMUNITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI, BE TOLD DIRECTLY OF THIS NEWS BEFORE IT WAS RELEASED TO THE MEDIA THIS AFTERNOON.**

I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP CORPUS CHRISTI DEAL WITH THIS PAINFUL SITUATION WITH COMPASSION AND SENSITIVITY FOR THE ONGOING HEALING OF OUR PARISH AND CHURCH COMMUNITY.

I WILL JOIN MEMBERS OF MY STAFF, AND MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD INCLUDING JUDGE VINCENT BIFFERATO, DR. EILEEN SCHMITT AND MR. JUSTIN CARISIO, TO MEET WITH PARISH LEADERSHIP TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION AND HOW BEST TO ADDRESS THE HEALING NEEDS OF OUR PARISH.

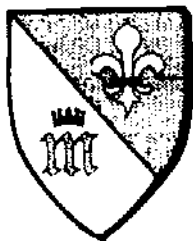
ONCE AGAIN, PLEASE BE ASSURED OF MY PRAYERS AS WE GO THROUGH THESE DIFFICULT TIMES TOGETHER. GOD BLESS YOU.

SINCERELY YOURS IN CHRIST,

BISHOP MICHAEL A. SALTARELLI

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

JANUARY 26, 2003



# *Immaculate Conception Priory*

Norbertine Fathers  
3600 Philadelphia Pike  
Claymont, DE 19703-3108  
(302) 792-2791 • (610) 485-0373  
FAX (302) 792-2998

May 22, 2002

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abbot E. Thomas De Wane, Administrator of the Immaculate Conception Priory released the following statement today, in response to yesterday's newspaper article concerning Father Edward J. Smith:

"A complaint of sexual misconduct against Rev. Edward J. Smith, a Norbertine priest has been reported to the Immaculate Conception Priory. The complaint involves alleged conduct approximately 27 years ago when Father Smith was assigned to Bishop Neumann High School in Philadelphia. The complaint has been reported to the appropriate authorities in Philadelphia and the police are investigating the matter. Pursuant to Norbertine policy, I have placed Father Smith on administrative leave, pending completion of the police investigation and possible further action in accordance with Norbertine policy regarding allegation of sexual abuse.

Father Smith is not engaged in any public ministry. Since 1996, Father Smith has been assigned to the business office of the Priory, which is located on the campus of Archmere Academy. After the allegations were reported to the Priory, and then to Archmere, it was determined that Father Smith no longer would enter the campus of the school. Father Smith lives in a private residence owned by the Norbertines that is not located on the campus of Archmere.

In view of the ongoing Philadelphia police investigation, the Immaculate Conception Priory will have no further comment of this matter."

ETD: jmcg



# ARCHMERE ACADEMY

3600 Philadelphia Pike • Claymont, DE 19703 • 302.798.6632 • 610.485.0373 • Fax: 302.798.7290

May 22, 2002

Dear Parents, Alumni and Students,

You may have read, or heard about, newspaper coverage concerning Father Edward J. Smith, a Norbertine priest. The news coverage discusses a complaint of alleged sexual misconduct by Father Smith 27 years ago, when he was on the faculty at Bishop Neumann High School in Philadelphia. In response to these allegations, and prior to the newspaper coverage, Abbot De Wane placed Father Smith on administrative leave, pending completion of an investigation, in accordance with Norbertine policy regarding allegations of sexual abuse. After Abbot De Wane reported the allegations to Archmere, which also was prior to the newspaper coverage, the Executive Committee of the Archmere Academy Board of Trustees immediately informed the Abbot that Father Smith is not permitted on the campus of Archmere.

Father Smith is not on the faculty, and holds no administrative or other position, at Archmere Academy. He taught English at Archmere from 1982-84, and served as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees from 1997-2001. Since 1996, Father Smith has worked in the business office of the Immaculate Conception Priory. Father Smith does not live in The Patio, and performs no public ministry.

If you have any questions about Father Smith's status, or Archmere's response to the allegations against him, or have any concerns about the reaction of your children to this news, please feel free to discuss them with me.

Sincerely,

Rev. Timothy F. Mullen, O.Praem.  
Headmaster

Contact: Bob Krebs  
302-573-3116  
[rkrebs@cdow.org](mailto:rkrebs@cdow.org)

Office of Communications

Diocese of Wilmington



**Statement from the Diocese of Wilmington  
regarding allegations against Father William E. Irwin**

April 5, 2002 --- (Wilmington, DE) --- An anonymous telephone call was made on April 2, 2002 directed to a Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington that accused him of committing a child abuse crime years ago. The caller challenged the Priest to immediately admit the alleged crime. The Priest, Father William E. Irwin, immediately advised the Bishop's office of the call.

The Catholic Diocese of Wilmington has made a report of the accusation to the Division of Child Protective Services of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families in compliance with the Delaware reporting statute. That mandatory report to the State was made without any judgement of guilt and was intended to comply with the law which requires notice to and investigation by the Division of Child Protective Services. In strict accordance with the existing Diocesan Policy, Father Irwin has been relieved of all priestly duties and faculties during the official investigation. He had been in residence at St. Mary Magdalen Parish in Sharpley, Wilmington, Delaware.

Aware of the official report to the authorities which named him, Father Irwin voluntarily appeared personally at Troop #2 of the Delaware State Police at 168 S. Dupont Highway in order to facilitate any investigative proceedings.

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April 15, 2002 at 3:00 p.m..

The Office of the Provincial of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales in Wilmington, Delaware, provides for immediate release the following statement:

The following statement was read by Fr. Joseph Morrissey, Provincial of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, at all the liturgies this past weekend (April 13-14) at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greensboro, North Carolina:

“With profound sadness I share with you the following information:

On Thursday evening (April 11, 2002) I received an allegation of inappropriate behavior against Fr. James O’Neill. The situation was years ago, before Fr. O’Neill came to North Carolina. In accordance with the policies of both the Diocese of Charlotte and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, Fr. O’Neill has been relieved of his responsibilities as pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish. During this interim period, Fr. Gilborges, with the assistance of the local clergy, including neighboring Oblates, will continue to serve the pastoral needs of the parish.

I ask you, as members of this parish community, to hold all of us in prayer, particularly Fr. Jim’s accuser and Fr. Jim himself. Every believer is touched by these tragic events. We ask the God of justice, mercy, and healing to guide us through the painful journey that lies ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you.”

[Fr. O’Neill was ordained in 1967. He served from 1968-73 as math teacher and assistant principal at Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria, VA; from 1973-86 as math teacher and principal at Salesianum School in Wilmington, DE; from 1986-90 as principal at Archbishop Wood in Warminster, PA; and from 1991-present as pastor at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greensboro, NC.]



**Statement from the Provincial of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales  
read during Masses at St. Paul the Apostle, Greensboro**

**April 13 – 14, 2002**

Good afternoon/[morning], I am Father Joseph Morressy, the Provincial of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. The Eucharist is our ultimate symbol of unity and compassion. First Eucharist is one of the greatest blessings in the life of the parish family. I want to congratulate each of our first communicants and their families and friends. This is a wonderful and faith-filled day.

It is, therefore, with profound sadness that I must share with you the most serious and tragic information.

On Thursday evening, I received an allegation of inappropriate behavior against Father James O'Neill. The situation occurred years ago, before Father O'Neill came to North Carolina. In accordance with the policies of both the Diocese of Charlotte and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, Father O'Neill has been relieved of his responsibilities as pastor of St. Paul the Apostle parish. During the interim period, Father Anthony Gilborges with the assistance of the local clergy including neighboring oblates will continue to serve pastoral needs of the parish.

I ask you as members of this parish community to hold all of us in prayer, particularly father Jims accuser and father Jim himself. Every believer is touched by these most tragic events. We ask the God of justice, mercy, and healing to guide us through the painful journey that lies ahead.

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