



# Archdiocese of Detroit NEWS

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## **Regarding the St. Blase Parish situation...**

A routine financial audit of St. Blase Parish, Sterling Heights, by the Archdiocese of Detroit in the spring of 2008 discovered an apparent pattern of embezzlement by a parish employee. A subsequent, more detailed audit began in April 2008 and uncovered what appeared to be a systematic misappropriation of parish funds by the employee. The misappropriations took place between 2004 and 2008.

The audit findings were presented to the Sterling Heights Police Department in October 2008. The amount missing, as reported to the police, was approximately \$25,500. The parish employee was relieved of all fiduciary responsibilities and has since been terminated.

The former employee is expected to be arraigned on felony charges of embezzlement on Nov. 23 in Macomb County Circuit Court.

As the case moves forward towards resolution, the Detroit archdiocese will be limited in further comment on this particular matter. In a broader context, however, it can be said that the archdiocese takes seriously its responsibility of financial stewardship and any actions that would compromise the trust of those who give to the church. Since 2007, the archdiocese has strengthened its safeguards against fraud by conducting regular periodic audits of all parishes and schools to ensure proper financial controls are in place.

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