



Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Bobby Webre

MEDIA RELEASE

May 30, 2019

Former Priest of Donaldsonville Catholic Church arrested on felony theft charge

Ascension Parish Sheriff Bobby Webre reports the arrest of Father Desmond Ohankwere on felony theft in excess of \$25,000 or more.

In mid-February 2019, the sheriff's office financial crimes unit began an investigation that Father Ohankwere had been utilizing funds from the church to pay his own personal accounts. The church reached out to the sheriff's office after an internal audit found discrepancies with several accounts.

As the investigation continued, it was learned that Father Ohankwere is contracted with the Missionary Society of St. Paul and was the priest at St. Catherine of Sienna in Donaldsonville for four years. Prior to the sheriff's office investigation, Father Ohankwere was transferred to another church in the Houston, Texas area in August 2018. After that, the church continued with an audit until the sheriff's office took over the investigation in February 2019.

A total of approximately \$60,000 was reported misused by Father Ohankwere.

A warrant was issued for his arrest on May 21 and Father Ohankwere was arrested by the Harris County Sheriff's Office in Houston, Texas on Wednesday, May 29.

Father Ohankwere will have an extradition hearing on Friday, May 31 to determine when he will be booked into the Ascension Parish Jail.

