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Priest Removed Due to 'Conflict'

The Rev. John Broderick's Suspension Wasn't Tied to Alleged Abuse, Official Says

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Post-Standard
March 5, 2008

<http://www.syracuse.com/articles/news/index.ssf?/base/news-0/1204710976281270.xml&coll=1>

The Roman Catholic priest accused last week of felony sexual abuse of four children in Montgomery County had not been assigned to a parish in the Syracuse Diocese since 2004.

The Rev. John W. Broderick, 47, had been on a leave of absence since then and was suspended from the ministry early this year, said Danielle Cummings, assistant chancellor and diocesan spokeswoman.

She cited "administrative conflict" between Broderick and Syracuse Bishop James Moynihan but would not provide details about why he was on a leave or suspended.

She said the discipline was not related to sexual abuse.

Broderick was released Thursday from the Montgomery County Jail after posting bail, which had been set at \$50,000 cash or \$100,000 bond.

He was charged Feb. 25 with four counts of sexual abuse and four counts of endangering the welfare of a child.

He is accused of engaging in inappropriate sexual contact last year with at least four children ages 5 to 11.

John Aretakis, a lawyer who is representing the victims, said Broderick befriended the family, who considered him their spiritual adviser. Aretakis said the investigation first focused on a suspicion that Broderick was providing alcohol to children.

Aretakis would provide no details about the victims, other than that they are siblings in a large family.

It's unclear where Broderick lived or whether he was ministering since 2004. Officials of the Albany and Ogdensburg dioceses have said they were not aware of Broderick's presence

there until the charges became public.

Typically, a priest needs permission from the local bishop to minister in a diocese other than where he was ordained.

Broderick was arrested at Holy Name of Jesus Academy in Massena. The school opened in September and is run by the Dominican Sisters of Idaho, a group that is not recognized by the Catholic Church.