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Priest Faces Molest Charge in Brooklyn

By Hasani Gittens and Jim Hinch
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A visiting Catholic priest who is the top financial officer for his African diocese was busted yesterday on charges of molesting a teenage girl as she stuffed envelopes in a Brooklyn church, authorities said.

The Rev. Anthony Ocloo, 45, of Ghana had been staying at St. Ephrem's Church in Bay Ridge while pursuing his MBA at St. John's University when the assault occurred, officials said.

"This has been like a punch in the stomach," said Monsignor Peter Kain, pastor of the church on Bay Ridge Parkway.

Ocloo - who oversees the books at the Keta-Akatsi Roman Catholic Diocese in Ghana - faces two counts of misdemeanor sexual abuse and one count of endangering the welfare of a child. He could land up to a year in jail if convicted.

Brooklyn DA Charles Hynes said the priest fondled the 16-year-old's breast and buttocks on Oct. 7.

Ocloo was freed without bail, but was ordered to turn over his passport. He also was suspended from his work at St. Ephrem's and evicted from its rectory.

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