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## **Allegation against Priest**

Found to Be Credible

Diocese of Brooklyn  
June 28, 2005

Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio has announced that an allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor against a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, Father Frank J. Capellupo, when he was a parochial vicar in Most Precious Blood parish in Long Island City, has been found to be credible.

In a letter to parishioners of Most Precious Blood Church, read at the Masses last weekend (June 25-26), the Bishop said the allegation was made by a young man who reported the inappropriate behavior to the Diocese a number of years after it took place.

Bishop DiMarzio said the Diocese turned the information over to the Queens District Attorney's Office and to the eight-member Diocesan Review Board, which employed the services of a professional investigator. The review board concluded that the claim was credible, and the Bishop accepted its report.

"I met with the young man who made the allegation," the Bishop wrote in his letter, "and offered continued pastoral assistance."

Father Capellupo, who served at Most Precious Blood for about a decade until 1995, is on administrative leave, meaning he may not perform public priestly ministry. Information about the matter has been sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican, the Bishop said.

Bishop DiMarzio's letter to the parishioners was read in English and Spanish by Very Rev. Sean P. Ogle, the Episcopal Vicar for the North Queens Vicariate. In it, the Bishop said the subject was "most difficult" because it addressed "a breach of trust and the violation of the appropriate norms of behavior" with a minor by a priest.

By presenting the information to the Diocesan Review Board, the Diocese conformed to the mandates of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002, and the accompanying "Essential Norms," approved by the Vatican Congregation for Bishops.

The Bishop said he had "high regard" for the "considered counsel and judgment" of the review board, which he said was comprised of lay persons, clergy and Religious "of outstanding integrity."

"The steps we have taken are essential to maintaining our commitment" to the bishops' Charter and Norms, the Bishop said. "It is a responsibility we take seriously."

As a community of the faithful, he said, "we in the Diocese remain unalterably committed to protecting all children and young people in every way possible," he wrote. "We again publicly apologize to victims/survivors and their families for the pain inflicted on them as a result of clergy sexual abuse."

Bishop DiMarzio extended an invitation to anyone who may have been a victim of clergy sexual abuse to come forward and report the information to the Diocese, using a toll-free number: (888) 634-4499.

The information will be reported to the District Attorney's Office and the diocesan Victims' Assistance Coordinator, Amityville Dominican Sister Ellen Patricia Finn, will be contacted "to make appropriate

services available," he said.

Sister Ellen Patricia, accompanied by five members of the diocesan Healing/Intervention Team, were on hand at Most Precious Blood Church at last weekend's Masses to meet with parishioners who sought to speak about the action taken regarding Father Capellupo.

Sister Ellen said she and her associates — Joseph Dass, Madeline Hogan, Beverley Madar, James Noble and Alfred Wassler — found the parishioners to be "a tremendously faith-filled community, saddened by, yet most appreciative of, the Bishop's letter."

She noted that many offered prayers for the victim and the family, as well as for Father Capellupo.

"God is clearly in the midst of this parish community," she said.

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