



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

April 27, 2024

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of San Antonio Parish,

Since Father Leo Riley previously served in your parish and in a spirit of transparency, I wish to bring to your attention issues pertaining to his priestly ministry.

On May 17, 2023, Reverend Leo Riley was placed on administrative leave pending the results of a preliminary investigation that was to occur in the Archdiocese of Dubuque. It was there that an allegation of sexual misconduct against Father Riley had been made. Although we have not had official notification of the results of the investigation, it was learned on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, that Father Riley had been arrested here in Florida and will face criminal charges of sexual abuse in Iowa.

It is normally the policy of the Diocese of Venice not to comment on pending litigation. There is a pending civil lawsuit of 2020 against Father Riley here in Florida which upon its receipt was reported to the State Attorney of Charlotte County. At the time the civil lawsuit was received, the factual allegations therein were inaccurate and contradictory. The plaintiff has since changed his allegations and the litigation is still pending.

As your Bishop, I would like to assure you that the Diocese of Venice takes these matters seriously and remains committed to doing its utmost to protect children and vulnerable adults. Anyone who believes that he or she has been the victim of sexual misconduct by someone serving in ministry for the Diocese of Venice, or for that matter by anyone, should contact law enforcement officials at 1-800-962-2873. The Diocese of Venice provides a Victim Assistance Coordinator, who can be reached at 941-416-6114.

Father Riley has denied these allegations. Please join me in praying that the Lord of Truth and Light will allow justice to prevail, and that all victims be healed, and their pain and suffering alleviated. Let us remain united in prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Frank J. Dewane

+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of
Venice in Florida

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