

For Release May 5, 2002
Two-Page FAX

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Regarding Father Tony (A.J.) Conti...

“On Sunday, May 5th, 2002, the parish community of All Saints Catholic Church in Memphis, Michigan, was informed that Fr. Tony (A.J.) Conti (pronounced *Kon-tee*) has resigned as pastor and is on a leave of absence from the active priestly ministry.

“These actions follow a credible allegation of sexual misconduct arising from the early years of Fr. Conti’s service as a priest.

“The archdiocese is committed to cooperating with civil authorities in accord with its recently-signed voluntary agreement on the reporting of such cases. Likewise, Father Conti is cooperating fully in this process.

“An offer of pastoral care has been extended to those involved. Fr. Leo Broderick, a senior priest in the archdiocese, has been appointed temporary administrator of All Saints Parish.”

--Statement from Ned McGrath
Director of Archdiocesan Communications
Sunday, May 5th, 2002

Regarding Fr. Dennis Laesch...

“On Sunday, May 5th, 2002, the parish community of St. Alfred Catholic Church in Taylor, Michigan, was informed that Fr. Dennis Laesch (pronounced *Lesh*) has taken a temporary leave of absence to deal with personal matters that have arisen.

“At this time, there is sufficient ambiguity regarding a previous allegation of sexual misconduct brought forward against Fr. Laesch. In that this information will be presented to civil authorities under terms of a recently-signed voluntary agreement on the reporting of such cases, it was mutually determined that Fr. Laesch’s departure from St. Alfred would be in the best interest of the archdiocese and the parish. Father Laesch is cooperating fully in this process.

“Fr. Frank Weingartz, a senior priest of the archdiocese, has been appointed temporary administrator of St. Alfred Parish.”

--Statement from Ned McGrath
Director of Archdiocesan Communications
Sunday, May 5th, 2002

--More--

Fr. Conti and Fr. Laesch---FIRST ADD

New Location for Press Briefing

There will be a press briefing on these matters and related concerns at 11 a.m. on Monday, May 6th, on the 2nd Floor of the Chancery Building, 1234 Washington Boulevard (next door to St. Aloysius Church), in downtown Detroit. Photos will be available at that time. This press briefing was originally scheduled at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, but the location has been changed to the Chancery Building. For more information, call 313-237-5943.

Biographical Data

Fr. Tony (A.J.) Conti, age 53

Ordained: May 1976

Education: St. John Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, M.Div.

Associate Pastor:

1976 — Our Lady Queen of Heaven, Detroit

1977 — St. Edmund, Warren

1978 — St. Andrew, Detroit.

Pastor:

1983 — St. Ignatius, Detroit

(1989 — legally changed his last name from Helinski to Conti)

Associate Pastor:

1989 — St. Anne, Warren

2000 — Sacred Heart, Dearborn

Pastor:

2001 — All Saints Parish, Memphis

May 2002 — Resigned pastorate; leave of absence

Fr. Dennis Laesch, age 47

Ordained: May 1996

Education: Wayne State University, B.S.; Detroit College of Law, J.D.; Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, M.Div.

Associate Pastor:

1996 — St. Andrew, Rochester

1999 — St. Blase, Sterling Heights

Pastor:

2000 — St. Alfred, Taylor

May 2002 — Temporary leave of absence

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