FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Archdiocese of Dubuque priest accused of past sexual abuse of minor

Dubuque, Iowa – An allegation of past sexual abuse of a minor has been made against an active priest of the Diocese of Venice, Florida. The allegation against Father Leo Riley is said to have occurred between 1985–1986 while he was a priest of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, serving as the associate pastor at the Church of the Resurrection in Dubuque.

Archdiocese of Dubuque personnel responded to the allegation first reported on Friday, May 5, and immediately began operating in accordance with archdiocesan abuse allegation policies.

The Most Rev. Richard E. Pates, Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, spoke with the Bishop of Venice, the Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane, who has placed Father Leo Riley on administrative leave while the Archdiocese of Dubuque Review Board for the Protection of Minors begins an investigation.

Father Riley was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Dubuque in 1982 and requested a move to the Diocese of Venice, Florida in 2002 to be closer to his parents. He was incardinated into (became a priest of) the Diocese of Venice in 2005.

Riley was previously accused of past sexual abuse of a minor in 2014. Retired Archbishop Michael O. Jackels of Dubuque said of the investigation outcome in 2015, “The best information available does not support a reasonable belief that the allegation is true. Therefore, in the matter of the accusation made against Father Riley, unless additional evidence is presented, there is no need to pursue it any further.”

Bishop Richard Pates, Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, said, “It is a top priority for me that we address all allegations of sexual abuse with utmost transparency, consistency and accountability outlined by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People; the comprehensive set of procedures established by United States Catholic bishops over twenty years ago. This archdiocese continues to work diligently to ensure a safe environment for children and all vulnerable individuals in our churches and schools.”

Anyone who knows of allegations of the sexual abuse of minors perpetrated by Father Riley when he was assigned for ministry in the Archdiocese of Dubuque is asked to contact Lynn Osterhaus,
Staff Contact for the Office for the Protection of Children, at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center (1229 Mt. Loretta Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52003; 563-556-2580).

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