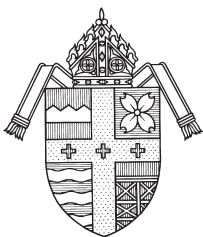

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Knoxville

Contact: Deacon Sean Smith, chancellor
Phone: 865-584-3307
E-mail: ssmith@dioknox.org



The Chancery
805 Northshore Drive
Knoxville, Tenn. 37919
www.dioknox.org

PRESS RELEASE AND MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release

July 28, 2010

Bishop Stika releases statement after Casey verdict announced in North Carolina

On Wednesday, July 28, Bishop Richard F. Stika of the Diocese of Knoxville issued the following statement:

As you know, on April 14 Mr. Warren Tucker informed us that during the 1970s he had been sexually abused by William Casey, who at the time was a priest of the Diocese of Nashville serving in East Tennessee.

The following day, Mr. Casey told me during a private meeting that there was “credibility” to the accusations. I immediately and permanently removed his priestly faculties, in keeping with the U.S. bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and our own policy on sexual misconduct. He will never again serve as a priest of this diocese or any diocese in the world.

Today we learned that Mr. Casey pleaded guilty in McDowell County, N.C., to charges of crimes against nature. In return for his plea, he was sentenced to three years in prison, and the sentence was suspended to 24 months of supervised probation. We have observed and fully cooperated with the judicial process.

When Mr. Tucker came to us this spring, I assured him of my prayers and those of the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Knoxville. I also apologized to him and reiterated my firm belief that the sexual abuse of minors by anyone is a travesty of the greatest magnitude and an abomination before God.

I wish to restate my apology and my commitment to continued prayers for Mr. Tucker and his family. I applaud him and other victims of sexual abuse for their bravery in coming forward to seek healing and justice. I strongly encourage all victims of abuse to do the same.

*Note: The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People is available online at www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.shtml. Our diocesan policy on sexual misconduct is available in English and Spanish on our website at dioknox.org/child-protection/safe-environment/.