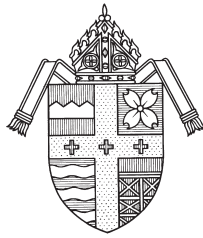


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# The Roman Catholic Diocese of Knoxville

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## **PRESS RELEASE AND MEDIA ADVISORY**

**For immediate release**

**April 14, 2010**

# Diocese of Knoxville immediately responds to allegation of sexual abuse

KNOXVILLE—The Diocese of Knoxville’s chancellor, Deacon Sean Smith, announced today that this morning he met with representatives of the local SNAP organization and Mr. Warren Tucker, 44, who has come forward with an allegation of sexual abuses from approximately 1975 through 1980.

The man who has been accused is a retired priest of the Diocese of Knoxville who lives in East Tennessee.

“I instructed Mr. Tucker that the Diocese of Knoxville will follow our Policy and Procedure Relating to Sexual Misconduct to the letter. I told him that the first thing I would do after our meeting would be to notify civil law-enforcement authorities. As soon as the meeting was concluded, we did in fact notify the authorities in two counties—where the alleged abuse occurred and the county in which the priest lives.”

“I then immediately notified our bishop, Bishop Richard F. Stika, and the bishop of Nashville, David R. Choby, since during those years all of East Tennessee was part of the Diocese of Nashville.

“What happens now is that Bishop Stika will issue a decree beginning a diocesan investigation. In the meantime, the priest has been suspended, with all priestly faculties removed. That means that during the time of the investigation, he will not be allowed to present himself as a priest, to wear clerical garb, or to serve as a priest in any capacity.”

“Our No. 1 goal and objective is first to assist the victim in any way we can and to ensure that all the children in our care are protected.”

Much more information about the diocese’s policies is available here: <http://dioknox.org/child-protection/safe-environment/>. From this link the Policy and Procedure may be downloaded.