



Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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For release: Immediately

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**Statement regarding Msgr. Michael Cherup**

The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee was informed on July 19 that an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor was made against Msgr. Michael Cherup for an incident that allegedly occurred twenty years ago in August 1993 when the victim was 15 years old.

After being made aware of the allegation, the Diocese, pursuant to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (USCCB, 2005, rev. 2011) and our diocesan policy, encouraged the victim to report the incident to appropriate law enforcement and to the Florida Department of Children and Families Abuse Hotline. The Diocese also offered the provision of counseling to the victim. In addition, the Diocese reported the alleged incident to the State Attorney's office.

Following an initial internal investigation, it was determined to be a credible allegation. On August 29, Bishop Gregory Parkes removed Msgr. Cherup from active ministry. This means that Msgr. Cherup was removed from all functions at his parish and school and on the diocesan level, and may not publicly celebrate the sacraments or function as a priest, pending the final outcome of the investigation.

As the matter continues to be investigated, the diocese pledges full cooperation with investigative agencies in this matter.

"Whenever all allegation of sexual abuse is brought forward, it causes great pain for all involved. I assure everyone involved in this difficult situation of my prayers," said Bishop Parkes.

We urge anyone who may have been abused by a member of the clergy, an employee or a volunteer in ministry with the Church, or who knows of such abuse, to report it to law enforcement by calling the Florida Department of Children and Families Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873 (1-800-96ABUSE) or by calling the Victim Assistance Coordinators: Pensacola/Fort Walton Beach: Louis M. Makarowski, PhD, PA, (850) 477-7181 or in Tallahassee/Panama City: Dr. James Gagnon, MSW, LCSW, (850) 877-0205 or call 950-435-3500 and ask for the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

We offer our prayers for healing for all involved in this situation and vow to take all possible steps to protect the children and youths entrusted to our care.###