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FLINT

# Grand Blanc priest will remain on leave despite being cleared of improperly touching children

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Holy family Grand Blanc.JPG

Holy Family Catholic church

*(File)*

GRAND BLANC, MI -- A Grand Blanc priest will remain on administrative leave despite recently finding out he will not face charges [over accusations](#) that he inappropriately touched two children.

Diocese of Lansing Bishop Earl Boyea announced Tuesday, Oct. 7, that the Rev. Ken Coughlin of Holy Family Parish will remain on leave after Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton announced he would not file charges against Coughlin over claims he touched the hand and legs of two students earlier this year at Holy Family Catholic School in Grand Blanc.

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Boyea claimed that the leave stems from Coughlin's allegedly inappropriate relationship with adult women.

"... Father Coughlin has been undergoing an assessment and treatment to address his embrace of celibacy and its proper expression," Boyea said in his statement. "The treatment is ongoing and will help me decide on the best course for the future. In the meantime, Father Coughlin will continue to be on temporary administrative leave."

Coughlin's attorney, Frank J. Manley, said Coughlin is an outstanding priest who has dedicated his life to the church.

"Unfortunately, the reality is that a term like celibacy when involving the church includes an allegedly improper thought to a peck on the cheek," Manley said.

However, Manley said he understand the church's desire to ensure everyone in the parish that Coughlin is not engaged intentionally in improper acts.

Leyton announced Tuesday that he wouldn't file charges against Coughlin over the incidents involving children that allegedly happened earlier this year.

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"My office has reviewed the police investigation reports related to allegations of inappropriate behavior by a priest who is presently on leave from Holy Family Catholic Church," Leyton said in a statement announcing the decision not to file charges. "Based upon those reports, we do not find probable cause necessary to charge a crime related to the alleged actions of April 30, 2014."

Coughlin was initially put on administrative leave by the Diocese of Lansing after the accusations were made.

"We want to thank the authorities for the thoroughness of the investigation," Manley said after Leyton announced he would not file charges. "We believe the thoroughness and transparency of the investigation leaves no doubt Father Coughlin is innocent of the charge."

Boyea said in his statement that he appreciated that the concerns regarding the alleged inappropriate contact were forwarded to the authorities even if they did not result in criminal charges.

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"The Genesee County prosecutor's office has completed its review of the allegations against Father Ken Coughlin, and has determined his behavior does not warrant the filing of criminal charges," Boyea said. "Thus it is important that his reputation in this regard is to be restored. We all know that is not an easy thing to do. However, love and mercy must be the hallmark of all Christians."

Coughlin has served at Holy Family since 2007. He has a degree in packaging from Michigan State University and studied pre-theology at a Minnesota seminary.

He obtained a master's degree in theology in 1990 at St. John Seminary in Plymouth.

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