

# Dallas priest allegedly fondled 10-year-old while family was outside, affidavit says

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## Affidavit details allegations against Dallas priest

Police records show a Dallas priest charged with indecency with a child is accused of touching young girls under the age of 14.

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**DALLAS** - Police records show a [Dallas priest charged with indecency with a child](#) is accused of touching young girls under the age of 14.

Ricardo Reyes Mata, a priest with the Catholic Diocese of [Dallas](#), was arrested by Garland Police on Monday.

Investigators believe the alleged assaults took place in April inside the girls' home where he was visiting.

The Diocese of Dallas chose not to interview with FOX 4 on Wednesday, but it can provide a video statement in which the bishop calls the allegations "embarrassing." He says the Catholic school teacher who alerted her superiors to the allegations did the right thing.

Catholic Diocese of Dallas Bishop Edward Burns addressed the arrest of Father Mata, who most recently had been serving at Cathedral Guadalupe in Downtown Dallas.

"I learned that a child had told her Catholic school teacher about some inappropriate touching," he said.

#### **Dallas Catholic bishop addresses priest's arrest**

Dallas Catholic Diocese Bishop Edward Burns put out a video statement to address recent allegations made about a priest inappropriately touching two young girls.

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On April 26, a 10-year-old girl made an outcry to her Catholic school teacher in Garland about Mata inappropriately touching her while visiting her family's home according to an arrest affidavit.

"The teacher alerted her superiors, and a CPS report was immediately filed," Burns said. "And when the diocese was alerted, the diocese's security department contacted the Garland Police Department."

"This is a very sad situation, you know. We're dealing with children," said Garland Police Lt. Pedro Barineau.

The 10-year-old girl and two of her siblings, 11- and 14-year-old sisters, made statements to investigators about potential sexual abuse, according to the affidavit.

The children were interviewed at the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center. At least two of the three girls claimed Mata put his hands under their shirts.

An arrest warrant was issued.

"The priest, Ricardo Reyes Mata, came to the police department and turned himself in," said Barineau.

The priest is facing two charges of indecency with a child. An additional charge could be coming.

"There is an investigation of a third child, but we are working with the Dallas County prosecutors regarding that specific investigation," said Barineau.

As of now, there's no evidence of victims outside of the one family, according to police.

"Due to the nature of this investigation, there's always the possibility. And so we wanted to make sure that the public was aware in the event that this person did have contact with many people in the public," Barineau said.

Mata is suspended from the ministry. He was ordained as a priest in the Diocese of Dallas in 2022.

**PREVIOUS COVERAGE: Dallas priest charged with indecency with a child**

Garland Police say the allegations against Ricardo Reyes Mata are based on reports of inappropriate contact with two juveniles between the ages of 10 and

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Since June 2023, Mata was the parochial vicar at Cathedral Guadalupe. He was also the chaplain for Bishop Dunne Catholic School in Oak Cliff for the last year

"This is a difficult time. It is painful to watch the news about this alleged abuse," Burns said in the video statement. "It is embarrassing, but it is necessary. This is what zero tolerance looks like."

Mata is being held in the Dallas County jail on a \$175,000 bond.

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