

Philippine News Courier

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Retired Judge Behind P120K Bail Approval for Priest Who Was Arrested for Trafficking 13-Year Old Girl?



Rev. Msgr. Arnel Lagarejos, the Catholic priest who was arrested in Markina City last Friday night for allegedly trying to sexually abuse a 13-year old girl is now a free man. The suspect priest was released Tuesday afternoon, August 1 after he was allowed to post a P120,000-bail. Apparently, a retired judge was believed to have influenced the decision.

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"All along when I go to sleep Monday my gut feeling was that the priest would be denied bail. But when I woke up this morning I was surprised that it was the pimp who was denied bail," [Marikina Mayor Marcelino Teodoro told reporters](#) Tuesday, as he expressed his dismay over the decision to free Fr. Arnel Lagarejos for his human trafficking case.

Mayor Teodoro added that he has received reports that a retired judge was behind the bail recommendation for Fr. Arnel Lagarejos. And although he did not reveal further details, the city mayor said he will be looking into it very closely. Nevertheless, he noted that the prosecutor's decisions were based on the gravity of the documents provided by the police.

Based on the documents, [Fr. Arnel Lagarejos](#), the parish priest of St. John the Baptist Parish in Taytay, Rizal when he arrested, only "used" a trafficked person while the pimp was the one trafficking the 13-year old girl. Apparently, this is the reason why the suspect priest was only charged for violating Republic Act 9208, of the anti-human trafficking law.

Last Monday, Marikina police chief Senior Supt. Roger Quesada said that the unnamed victim confessed that it was already the third time that Fr. Lagarejos has booked her in exchange of sexual services, adding that the priest paid her P2,500 per booking. The suspect priest spent 3 days inside the Marikina city jail, but never released any statement.

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In a statement released last Monday, the Diocese of Antipolo said that Fr. Arnel Lagarejos has been stripped off from all his duties, and is not anymore allowed to communicate with minors. It also offered spiritual and psychological assistance to the victim. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church will conduct a separate investigation, led by retired Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

Contributed by Salvi Dalida



Posted by Phil News Courier at [11:54AM](#)

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