



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Director of youth ministry arrested and placed on administrative leave**

(NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SC) – Jacob Ouellette, director of youth ministry at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, has been arrested in connection with a multi-jurisdictional investigation targeting sexual exploitation of minors via the internet. He has been charged with one count of criminal solicitation of a minor and one count of second-degree attempted criminal sexual conduct with a minor.

Soon after learning about his arrest, Ouellette was placed on administrative leave. This means he is suspended from his position and is not allowed to participate in parish or school activities or be on parish or school properties.

Ouellette has been working at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church since August 2019. He volunteered at Holy Trinity Catholic School from 2016 – 2018 before being hired in October 2018. Additionally, he volunteered at St. Andrew Catholic School for several months in 2019.

Ouellette passed a criminal history screening, signed the diocesan required code-of-conduct, signed an acknowledgement of the diocese's policy concerning allegations of sexual misconduct and completed sex abuse prevention training before he was allowed to work with diocesan youth.

Anyone with information about possible sexual abuse with minors by Church personnel is asked to notify civil authorities in their area. Louisa Storen, victim assistance coordinator for the Diocese of Charleston, is available for a counseling referral and guidance should you or anyone in your family need her. She can be reached at (800) 921-8122.

The Diocese of Charleston asks the community to continue to pray for those who have suffered any of abuse.

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