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Philippine Catholic Church not to help repatriate Filipino priest charged with illegal possession of pornographic materials in the US

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GULF NEWS

Manila: The influential Catholic Church will not help repatriate a Filipino priest who was charged with illegal possession of pornographic materials in the United States, a TV report said.

Rev. Lowe B. Dongor will not conduct priestly duties while in the Philippines, following reports of his arrival in

his hometown in Iloilo, central Philippines last October 23, GMA News quoted the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines as saying.

The CBCP has no power to help repatriate Dongor if he is found in his hometown in central Philippines, GMA News said.

It was CBCP's response to the letter of Rev. Robert McManus of the Worcester Diocese, to CBCP President Nereo Odchimar, dated October 13.

In a letter to Odchimar, McManus said, "I bring this matter to Your Excellency's attention in case Father Dongor presents himself to Bishops in the archdioceses of the Philippines as a priest in good canonical standing."

Meanwhile, Dongor's presence in the Philippines was confirmed by his sister-in law, who told GMA News, "I don't believe in the charges filed against him. For us, he is kind and helpful to his family."

Dongor was scheduled to undergo trial in Massachusetts on October 25 for charges of theft and possession of pornographic materials. But he went missing on that day.

Last May 3, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in Massachusetts declared that "the acquisition, possession and distribution of child pornography is a canonical delict that pertains to the sexual abuse of a minor," MacManus said in his letter to the CBCP, to explain Dongor's misdemeanor.

Although no complaints were filed against him, Dongor was placed on administrative leave of absences in July, as associate pastor of his parish in Massachussets.

On September 12, he was arraigned in Fitchburg District Court for charges of having images of child pornography in his laptop.

However, he was released on the condition that he would not use computers; have no unsupervised contact with children under 14; not to wear clerical attire; and not to present himself as a priest in public, records of the case said.