

Dec 14, 2024

REGIONS

Bishop confirms he has custody of priest accused of rape

By: [Franklin A. Caliguid](#) - @inquirerdotnet Inquirer Mindanao / 07:43 PM August 27, 2011



BUTUAN CITY, Philippines—Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos confirmed Saturday that he has transferred a parish priest in his diocese who has been accused of raping a 17-year-old girl to the Bishop’s Palace in Butuan City but declined to comment at all on the case.

Word that the Rev. Raul Cabonce of the St. Anne Parish in Tubay, Agusan del Norte, had been transferred came first on Friday from the Caraga regional chapter of the women’s group Gabriela, which is assisting the girl in pursuing her charges against the priest.

“He is under my custody,” Pueblos said in a return call to the Inquirer. But he declined to discuss the case beyond confirming that the priest had been reassigned.

Article continues after this advertisement

EDITORS’ PICK MOST READ

OPINION
Streamlining connectivity: LGU compliance with EO 32 to bridge digital divide

NEWSINFO
Tolentino: Empower Filipina athletes by opening up more opportunities

SPORTS
PVL says 'imbalance' led to rescheduling of Akari-PLDT game

BUSINESS
2 PH enterprises recognized as Asia's best innovators

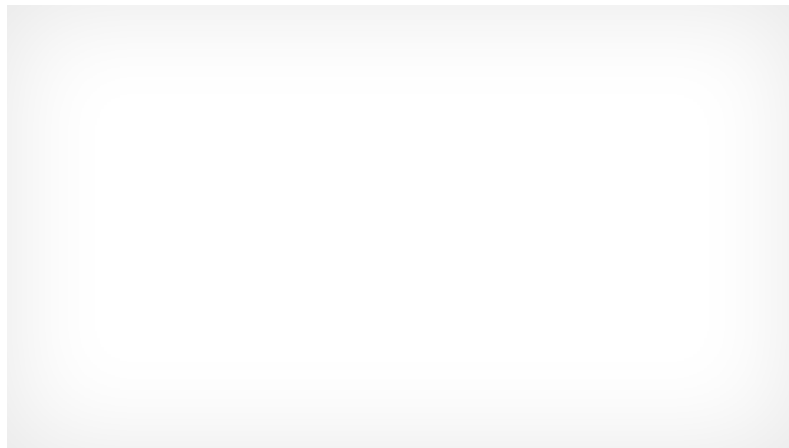
NEWSINFO
Climate change intensified back-to-back PH storms – study

GLOBALNATION
South Korea’s President Yoon impeached over

martial law bid

Lina Linaban, secretary general of Gabriela in Caraga, said in a statement on Friday her group was not satisfied with the removal of Cabonce from Tubay.

PUBLICIDAD



“It is not enough to transfer the erring priest to another parish where he can still violate other girls. He should be made accountable (for his acts) under the State’s laws as well as Church laws,” she said.

Linaban said the experience of the girl, identified only as Leah, showed “that exploitation and abuse occur even in places that seem safe.”

Article continues after this advertisement

You may like



VP Duterte jokes with Romualdez: Return or I'll replace you as...



When Knee Pain Hits, Try This (It's Genius)

mgid

“We are saddened that the crime happened within the very institution that is supposed to uphold morality. The priest exploited Leah’s trust and violated her despite her young age,” Linaban said.

Article continues after this advertisement

recommended by mgid



EEZEPATCH

When Knee Pain Hits, Try This (It's Genius)

Physical Therapist Shows The Easy Way To Finally Fix Knee Pain And Swelling

Subscribe to our newsletter!

Email Address

[LEARN MORE >](#)

EMAIL ADDRESS

SUBSCRIBE

By providing an email address, I agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and acknowledge that I have read the [Privacy Policy](#).

The alleged victim filed charges of rape, acts of lasciviousness and child abuse against Cabonce at the Agusan del Norte prosecutor's office last Thursday.

Article continues after this advertisement

She claimed that Cabonce abused her on five different occasions since September.

Cabonce repeatedly denied the allegations in radio interviews, dismissing them as “trumped-up” charges concocted by his unidentified detractors.

Article continues after this advertisement

He would not elaborate, however, saying he would file his answer to the charges in due time.

Linaban said based on the account of the girl, Cabonce had initially molested her by touching her private parts.

“Subsequent molestations, the last one ending in rape, happened on March 3 and 14,” Linaban said.

She said the girl “was threatened with a curse and an end to her scholarship to prevent her from telling anyone about her sexual ordeal.”

Linaban said Cabonce also “made sure that his guns and bladed weapon were in plain sight of Leah while violating her inside his room.”

Atel Hijos, Gabriela spokesperson for the Caraga region, said that despite Cabonce's denial, it was unlikely for the girl to make up stories that could soil her reputation.

“(She has) a strong case and sufficient evidence for Father Raul Cabonce's conviction,” she said.

Hijos told the Inquirer their group took custody of Leah, who “is now undergoing counseling for the severe emotional and psychological trauma resulting from Father Cabonce's abuses.”

“Leah was greatly affected by her traumatic experience. She could not imagine that this could happen to her considering that she trusted the priest as a man of God,” Linaban said.

She said Gabriela has urged Pueblos not to protect Cabonce and not cover up for the priest’s alleged misdeeds.

“Bishop Pueblos should be an instrument of justice and equality rather than engage in a cover up to protect Father Cabonce,” Hijos said.

“Like Leah, there may be other girls, who are not given the opportunity to finish their studies because of lack of resources. And often, like Leah, they are exploited because of their poverty,” she said.

[Subscribe to our daily newsletter](#)

Email Address

SIGN ME UP

By providing an email address, I agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and acknowledge that I have read the [Privacy Policy](#).

With a report from Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

READ NEXT

Thousands displaced by floods in Negros Occidental

Priest accused of rape moved to Butuan bishop’s palace



When Knee Pain Hits, Try This (It’s Genius)

CELEBRATION

