



Macomb County Sheriff's Office

Anthony M. Wickersham

"Determined to keep your trust. Working to keep you safe."

MEDIA CRIME REPORT

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Sheriff's Office Arrests Macomb Township Man

Macomb County Sheriff Anthony Wickersham reports that his agency has arrested a 47 year-old Macomb Township man after determining that he was involved in child sexual abusive activity. The Sheriff's Office had been contacted by the Archdiocese of Detroit over concerns with one of their employees, the Director of Admissions at the Austin Catholic Academy located in Ray Township.

The Sheriff's Computer-Crimes Team began an investigation on the 19th of November after receiving copies of electronic mail that had been intercepted by the parents of a child. The victim's parents had alerted the school where the man is employed.

The e-mails that were intercepted were sexually graphic and were indicative of child sexual-abuse activity.

The investigation culminated in the arrest of the man early this morning.

Joseph Peter Sturza is charged with:

- Count 1: Child Sexual Abuse Activity (20 year felony)
- Count 2: Computer-Communicating w/Another to Commit Crime (15 years)
- Count 3: Children-Accosting For Immoral Purposes (4 years)
- Count 4: Computer-Communicating w/Another to Commit Crime (4 years)

According to Sheriff Wickersham, the Archdiocese of Detroit has been fully cooperative and helpful in all aspects of the investigation. "As soon as the Archdiocese became aware of the allegations, they immediately took steps to remove the man from his position and they secured evidence."

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After interviews and investigation by Sheriff Detectives, the matter was brought to the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office and an arrest warrant was issued on 11-25-14.

This morning at approximately 7am, Detectives from the Macomb Sheriff's Enforcement Team and Computer Crimes Division served the arrest warrant and conducted a search of the man's home. Macomb County Prosecutor Eric Smith commented on the investigation and arrest:

“Generations of parents and students have placed their trust and safety in the hands of this rogue parish administrator. These abhorrent allegations shock the conscience of all citizens, regardless of faith, and serve to remind us all to remain vigilant for our children, no matter the circumstances.”

On Wednesday morning (11-26-14), Sturza was video-arraigned in the 42nd District Court of Romeo. He was given a \$50,000 cash-or-surety bond and he remains in the Macomb County Jail.

His next court date is set for December 9th, 2014 at 9am.

The Sheriff's Office will continue to investigate this matter and anyone who may have additional information is encouraged to call the Macomb County Sheriff's Enforcement Team at (586) 493-4861.

The Sheriff is available today between 2-3pm (11-26-14) for interviews.

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