

DAVID HAMMER

# Slidell priest Patrick Wattigny in St. Tammany jail after molestation arrest in Georgia

The Archdiocese of New Orleans said Wattigny self-reported Oct. 1 that he had abused a teen in December 2013.

Arrested priest arrives at St. Tammany Parish jail

Author: By David Hammer / Eyewitness Investigator

Published: 5:49 PM CDT October 26, 2020

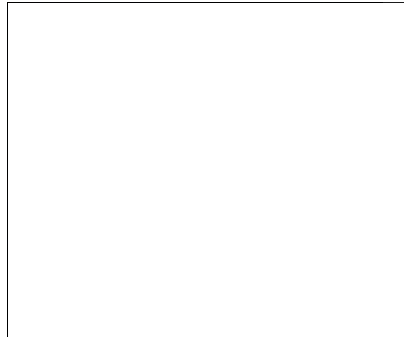
Updated: 6:52 PM CDT October 26, 2020



ST. TAMMANY PARISH, La. — A long-time Slidell priest accused of molesting an underage boy between five and seven years ago has been extradited from Georgia to the St. Tammany Parish jail.

Patrick Wattigny arrived Monday evening at the jail in Covington wearing an Archbishop Rummel t-shirt and a mask around 5:40 p.m. after a five-hour drive from the Troup County jail in

western Georgia, where he was arrested Thursday as a fugitive from St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's deputies, who had issued a warrant for his arrest on four counts of molestation of a juvenile.

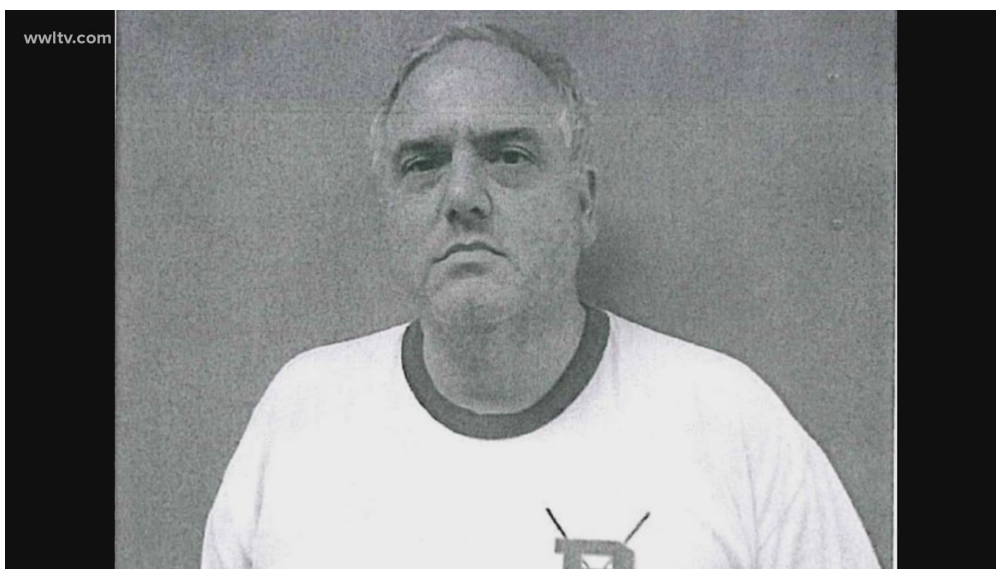


Wattigny was the pastor at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church in Slidell since 2013 and also served as chaplain at Pope John Paul II High School until he was removed this summer for sending inappropriate texts to a current student.

**RELATED: [Rev. Patrick Wattigny, accused of child molestation, arrested in Georgia](#)**

The St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office alleged Wattigny began a relationship with a 15-year-old shortly after he arrived on the Northshore, "grooming" him with phone calls and text messages. Deputies allege the priest sexually abused the boy on at least four separate occasions between December 2013 and December 2015, including multiple times at the St. Luke the Evangelist church rectory.

Before coming to Slidell, Wattigny had served in St. Benilde Parish and was the chaplain at Rummel High School in Metairie. Wattigny was wearing a Rummel T-shirt when West Point, Ga., police arrested him Thursday evening, according to a mug shot released by the Troup County Sheriff's Office.



The Archdiocese of New Orleans said Wattigny self-reported Oct. 1 that he had abused a teen in December 2013. The church said Wattigny had undergone psychological treatment and went on a spiritual retreat this summer, which the church said led to him admitting the 2013 abuse.

Church officials said they immediately reported that admission to law enforcement. Sources told WWL-TV and The Times-Picayune | New Orleans Advocate that Wattigny quickly left for his home in Georgia, which Troup County assessor's records indicate he's owned since 2012.

Ever since then, details about Wattigny's alleged abuse and the improper text messages has been in the news. In a joint investigation Oct. 15, WWL-TV and The Times-Picayune | New Orleans Advocate reported the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office had launched a criminal investigation into Wattigny.

**RELATED: [Slidell priest under investigation for child sex crime, St. Tammany Sheriff's Office confirms](#)**

Then, last Wednesday, a day before Wattigny's arrest, [the TV station and newspaper reported Archbishop Gregory Aymond was looking into a possible church trial in Rome](#) to have Wattigny stripped of his priestly state.

According to the West Point Police Department's incident report of Thursday's arrest, "Mr. Wattigny stated that he knew he had warrants in Louisiana but that he did not know that we would catch him."

The report says West Point officers received a call alerting them to St. Tammany Parish warrants seeking Wattigny's arrest at 7 p.m. Thursday, arrived at his house by 7:07 p.m., met the priest at the front door and placed him in handcuffs.

► *Get breaking news from your neighborhood delivered directly to you by downloading the new FREE WWL-TV News app now in the [iOS App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).*

## You May Like

Sponsored Links by Taboola

**Hey friend! Can I help you save on car insurance?**

Progressive | Auto Insurance Quotes

**Old Camera Found In The Deep Ocean Reveals Horrifying Titanic Photos**

Floor8

**Hair Revamps That Made People Look Completely Different**

POPSUGAR