

OFFICE OF DAKOTA COUNTY ATTORNEY
JAMES C. BACKSTROM
COUNTY ATTORNEY



Dakota County Judicial Center
1560 Highway 55
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392
Phillip D. Prokopowicz, Chief Deputy
Karen A. Schaffer, First Assistant
Monica Jensen, Community Relations Director

Telephone
(651) 438-4438
FAX: (651) 438-4479 (Civil Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4500 (Criminal Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4499 (Juvenile/Admin Division)
E-mail: attorney@co.dakota.mn.us

September 27, 2012

NEWS RELEASE

**PASTOR CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT
AND DEPRIVATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS**

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that Gustaro Resendiz Talabera, age 39 of West St. Paul, has been charged* with Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Third Degree and two counts of Deprivation of Custodial/Parental Rights in connection with an affair he is alleged to have had with a 16-year-old parishioner of the church in which he served as a pastor in West St. Paul.

On September 26, 2012, West St. Paul Police Department responded to a call concerning a juvenile female runaway. The child, who is 16 years of age, did not attend school that day and was not found at home where she had told her mother she would be because she was sick. In fact, the parents found some of her personal items and clothing missing from the residence. Before they called the police, the parents had been contacted by a woman from their church who told them that she was the wife of Gustaro Resendiz Talabera. Talabera's wife told the child's parents that she believed her husband and their daughter had run away together. Police later spoke to Talabera's son who had spoken to his father on the phone that same day and learned that Talabera had told his son that he was having an affair with a young woman who might be pregnant and that they were attempting to flee to Mexico together.

West St. Paul police officers were able to track the cell phones of Talabera and the girl to the Chicago, Illinois area, where Talabera had relatives. Following issuance of a nationwide warrant for Talabera's arrest, Talabera was located and placed in custody early this afternoon in Joliet, Illinois. Police also took the 16-year-old girl into protective custody. The girl will be returned to Minnesota as soon as possible and the extradition process has begun to secure the return of Talabera to our state to face these charges.

Additional facts pertaining to this case can be found online at
<http://services.co.dakota.mn.us/ComplaintSearch>.

Backstrom commented: "We are grateful that the quick intervention by the West St. Paul Police Department and other assisting law enforcement agencies resulted in this young woman being safely found before she was taken across the Mexican border. Crimes of this nature involving children are extremely serious."

If you have questions, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4440.

**Criminal charges are not evidence of guilt. A defendant/suspect is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*