

## FLORIDA: Venice Priest arrested in theft of church funds

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A Venice priest has been arrested, charged in the theft of more than \$50,000 in church funds.

Robert Kondratik, 67, is believed to have written 28 checks for \$53,950 over a 7-month period last year. Some of the checks were made out to “Cash” while the others were made out to himself, investigators say.

Holy Spirit Orthodox Church council members told investigators that Kondratik asked for blank checks to pay the church’s expenses. They state he was paid \$3,673 a month, as well as reimbursed for medical insurance. He also received an automobile allowance. Those amounts paid to Kondratik are separate from the funds he allegedly misused, investigators say.

The probable cause affidavit states that a number of the checks Kondratik wrote were noted to have been intended for a “Good Samaritan Fund,” which is used to help parishioners. According to the check memo line, the amount of these checks was \$18,000.

Kondratik was unable to provide an explanation, or provide documentation or receipts, the affidavit states.

Kondratik was the subject of a similar investigation in Syosset, N.Y., but no criminal charges were ever filed, according to the affidavit. He was relieved of his duties at that church in 2007.

Kondratik faces a felony count of grand theft in Sarasota County on \$50,000 bond.

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