

CHICAGO (IL)

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by Lisa Donovan

Priest allegedly stole \$200,000

A Chicago Catholic priest has been charged with felony theft for allegedly stealing close to \$200,000 from his parish and spending it on European vacations, trips to Neiman Marcus and liquor.

On Wednesday, the Rev. Mark Sorvillo, knowing he was about to be arrested, turned himself in to Chicago Police and was charged, said John Gorman, a spokesman for the Cook County state's attorney's office. Sorvillo was expected to spend the night in the Cook County Jail and make his first court appearance today.

In February, the Archdiocese of Chicago removed Sorvillo as pastor of St. Margaret Mary Church in West Rogers Park over what officials called "misappropriation of funds."

'Shenanigans' cited

Founded in 1921, St. Margaret Mary counts Cook County State's Attorney Dick Devine among its parishioners.

A discrepancy in last year's Christmas mass collections raised concerns of parishioners and the archdiocese, a law enforcement source said. Sorvillo apparently admitted to "some shenanigans," the source said.

A spokeswoman for the archdiocese said procedures are in place to detect accounting irregularities.

Sorvillo's attorney couldn't be reached for comment.
