News



Fr. Andrew Showers, director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Madison, Wis., and parochial vicar for Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, had been "taken into custody Aug. 24, 2025, on allegations of child enticement, use of a computer to facilitate a child sex crime, and attempted second degree sexual assault of a child." Father Showers is pictured in a booking photo. (OSV News/Waupaca County Sheriff's Office)

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Madison, Wis. — August 29, 2025
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A Wisconsin priest who headed up his diocese's Office of Worship has been arrested for allegedly seeking to meet up for sex with someone whom he believed was an underage teen girl.

In an Aug. 26 letter to the faithful, Bishop Donald Hying of Madison announced that Fr. Andrew Showers — director of the diocese's Office of Worship and parochial vicar for Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Madison — had been "taken into custody on allegations of child enticement, use of a computer to facilitate a child sex crime, and attempted second degree sexual assault of a child."

The charges, all felonies, carry maximum sentences of anywhere from 20 to 40 years, and fines ranging from $50,000 to $100,000.

Hying said the 37-year-old priest was detained in Waupaca County, Wisconsin — some 120 miles north of the parish — on Sunday, Aug. 24.

A copy of a criminal complaint obtained by OSV News shows Showers was apprehended in his vehicle with hotel room keys, his wallet and identification, and a single pill later identified as Sildenafil (commonly known as Viagra), used for the treatment of erectile dysfunction.

In a statement posted to Facebook, Chief Craig Freitag of the Clintonville Police Department said that Showers was taken into custody "at approximately 7:32 p.m." Aug. 24, and that the priest — whose clerical status was discovered during the investigation — was transferred to the Waupaca County Jail and booked.

The Waupaca County District Attorney's office advised OSV News that a $10,000 bond "was posted right away" and that Showers was free on bond until his initial court appearance Sept. 30. The office was unable to confirm who put up the bond money.

"While the investigation is ongoing, he has been completely restricted from all public ministry and barred from having contact with minors," said Hying. "Fr. Showers is also afforded a presumption of innocence in the pursuit of justice."

In his message, Hying said he was "grieved beyond words," and assured the faithful that "diocesan staff, clergy, and I are working in full cooperation with law enforcement."

In a separate statement, the diocese reiterated the bishop's comments, noting that "following Canon Law protocols, Fr. Showers will be completely restricted from all exercise of public ministry while the investigation is ongoing," and that "under Civil and Canon Law, Fr. Showers is afforded a presumption of innocence in the pursuit of justice."

According to the criminal complaint, a Clintonville sergeant, posing as a fictitious 14-year-old girl named "Abby," received a private response to his Aug. 10 post in a sexually explicit Reddit forum.

The respondent, using the handle DFALK7, said he was a 36-year-old male from Madison in the area on vacation. After the undercover sergeant advised that "Abby" was 14, the conversation continued from about Aug. 10 through at least Aug. 18, becoming increasingly sexually explicit, with DFALK7 allegedly inquiring about, among other things, the teen's "favorite sexual positions" and "previous sexual experiences."

DFALK7 also said he wanted to meet on a Monday, his regular day off, and proposed both "oral sex as well as intercourse," sending a partially nude photograph of himself and requesting "a full body photograph of Abby in return," according to the complaint.

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The exchange then moved to the Telegram messaging platform, where DFALK7 adopted the user name DSCHAUER001, according to the complaint, which noted that the user sent an Aug. 18 message proposing an in-person meetup, either at Abby's house or a hotel, on Aug. 25 before his purported trip to California. The user also asked whether Abby would be menstruating at the time and solicited another photo of her.

The complaint said that Showers had allegedly booked a room at the Cobblestone Inn in Clintonville and arranged to meet Abby between 7 and 8 p.m. Aug. 24 at Pigeon Lake Wayside Park in that town. In that message, the suspect also asked "how many times a day she would be able to have sexual intercourse," said the complaint.

Law enforcement, who were able to identify Showers based on photos he had sent to the undercover sergeant, apprehended the priest without incident after he drove into the site's parking lot.

The complaint indicated that while in Clintonville police custody, Showers "drafted a letter addressed to 'Abby' wherein he apologized for his actions stating that he had put his 'own desires, wants, and brokenness before [her] wellbeing… and I am sorry that you were the recipient and victim of my poor decisions and selfish pursuits.'"

"As in any criminal case, the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty," Freitag said in his statement.

Hying said in his letter that "there have been no previous allegations of sexual misconduct connected to Fr. Showers."

The diocese said that Showers had been ordained in 2017, and had served at Our Lady of Guadalupe since 2023 and at the Office of Divine Worship since 2024.

Following a summer 2017 parochial vicarate at one parish, Showers' previous assignments in the Madison Diocese ranged from one to two years in length, with a 2020-2022 pastorate at St. Stephen Parish in Clinton. He assisted with Mass in Spanish at St. John the Baptist in Waunakee in 2022, and from 2022 to 2023 was a priest in residence at All Saints in Berlin and Our Lady of the Lake in Green Lake.

Some six months after his ordination, Showers was profiled along with two fellow new priests in a December 2017 article for Madison Magazine. In the feature, the Madison native said he had since childhood intended to study architecture and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a degree in the field.

During his college years, his faith deepened as he spent time at the campus' Newman Center, and he found a mentor in Schoenstatt Fr. Mark Niehaus, who later served as the vesting minister at his ordination.

Showers told Madison Magazine that his hobbies included "brewing beer, playing hockey and going fishing," and that he had "a lot of really good friends who are married couples.

"I can see the beauty in their marriage," he told the magazine. "I have respect for that and they have respect for my vocation as the priest and the celibate. It’s complementary.”

He said that he aimed to "get people to … have a relationship with Christ," who "more fully reveals man to himself. If I know Christ, that reflects back and I start to know who I'm meant to be."