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Connecticut priest sentenced to five months in prison

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Connecticut Catholic pastor Fr. Michael Moynihan was sentenced to five months in federal prison after pleading guilty to obstructing a federal investigation into his personal use of parish money. He will have to pay the parish \$409,000 for reimbursement of the investigation.

It was an open secret for years in Greenwich, Conn., and beyond that Moynihan, pastor of perhaps the wealthiest parish in town, St. Michael's Parish, lived the high life. Stories abounded of Moynihan's lifestyle: for example, having white-glove waiters serve the vicariate dinners held at St. Michael's. There were plenty of red flags that something was materially amiss.

The Bridgeport diocese, then under now-Archbishop of Baltimore William Lori, never adequately explained how it missed Moynihan's malfeasance. While Moynihan finally gets jail time for obstruction of a federal investigation, the Bridgeport diocese has not sued Moynihan for a return of the funds he stole from the parish.

Furthermore, neither the federal prosecutor, David Fein, nor the current state attorney general, George Jepsen, has pressed criminal charges against Moynihan. Jepsen's longtime predecessor, Richard Blumenthal, now a senator for the state of Connecticut, never prosecuted multiple priest embezzlement cases in the Bridgeport diocese, the Hartford Archdiocese and the Norwich diocese.

Now that's religious freedom.

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