

Statement of Bishop Edward K. Braxton of the Diocese of Belleville  
8 January 2018

**The Catholic Diocese of Belleville has been advised earlier today that the Rev. Gerald R. Hechenberger, the Associate Pastor of Holy Childhood Parish in Mascoutah, St. Pancratius Parish in Fayetteville and St. Liborius Parish in St. Libory, was taken into custody this morning by St. Clair County authorities.**

**This is a very serious matter for Father Hechenberger.**

**At this point, the Diocese has no reason to believe that any parishioners are affected by this matter. The Diocese is awaiting an update on information from the civil authorities, and has assured them of the Diocese's full cooperation.**

**Beyond requesting your prayers for Father Hechenberger, the Diocese will make no further comment at this time.**