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by The Associated Press

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A former Louisiana priest convicted of molesting an altar boy was released from jail on bond over coronavirus safety concerns.

Michael Guidry, 77, was released April 24 nearly a year after he pleaded guilty to molesting a 16-year old boy after giving him alcohol in Guidry's home, The Advertiser [reported](#). The victim said in a civil lawsuit that he woke up one day in 2015 after doing chores in Guidry's home and found the former priest molesting him, The Advocate [reported](#). The victim told authorities about the molestation when he was an adult, four years after it happened.

Guidry, who served as the priest of St. Peter's Church in Morrow, was then sentenced to 10 years in prison in April 2019, KATC-TV [reported](#).

His release on bond from St. Landry Parish jail comes amid objections from state prosecutors after his defense attorney, Jane Hogan, requested an emergency appeal hearing because of the virus outbreak. Guidry had been awaiting another sentencing hearing after a request to reconsider his 10-year sentence was denied by a judge in September, KATC-TV [reported](#).

Kevin Bourgeois, a volunteer at a New Orleans nonprofit group for survivors of clergy abuse, [told KATC-TV](#) Guidry's release on bond sends a message to survivors that "their life is not as important as this sex offender's life."

Judge Alonzo Harris, the same judge who sentenced Guidry last year, had set the bond for Guidry. During that sentencing, the judge said "there are some things in life you just can't tolerate and one is sexual abuse on our children by priests."

Guidry will be placed on house arrest with an ankle monitor while on bond, and the court has also instructed him to not make contact with the victim.

Tommy Guilbeau, a defense attorney that is not involved in the case, said while it's "highly unusual" for a felon convicted of child molestation to be on house arrest, not releasing them at this time would be "condemning them to die in a petri dish of COVID-19."

The victim's parents and siblings told the court last year that the abuse caused chaos and pain in their family. The family declined to comment to KATC-TV due to a gag order.

The AP does not usually name victims of sexual assault.

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