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Monroe County

Safe with religious items stolen from St. Patrick Church

Thieves broke into St. Patrick Church in Carleton overnight, stealing a large, heavy safe that contained religious articles and wireless microphones. There was no money in the safe, but the value of the items it contained was estimated to be in the thousands. The church's pastor, Fr. Robert Bauer, this morning alerted the Monroe County Sheriff's Department, who subsequently conducted an investigation. As of early afternoon, no arrests had been made. St. Patrick Church is at 2996 W. Labo Road, on the northeast corner of Labo and Exeter roads, about four miles west of where I-275 and Telegraph Road intersect.

The thieves gained entry through two doors near the church's handicap accessible ramp. They did not violate the church's worship space, but located the safe in the clergy vesting area.

The safe contained chalices, ciboria, and a monstrance—sacred vessels used for Holy Communion. Chalices and ciboria are the containers used to hold and distribute the consecrated hosts and wine, which Catholics understand to be the Body and Blood of Christ, during the Catholic liturgy. The monstrance is used to display a consecrated host in prayer services. One of the stolen chalices had been a gift to Fr. Bauer from his parents for his ordination. The three stolen chalices, each of which was gold-plated, bore the following inscriptions: "To our son, Fr. Robert Bauer, with love, Mom and Dad on his ordination day," "In loving memory of Lillian Chont," and "In memory of Cindy McGowen." A large platter meant to carry chalices, which also was among the safe's contents, bore the inscription, "In memory of Dale Powell."

Anyone with information on the break-in or the stolen items is encouraged to contact St. Patrick Parish at (734) 654-2500 or the Monroe County Sheriff's Office at (734) 240-7401.

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