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The pastor of a Catholic parish has been asked to step aside following allegations he sexually assaulted a minor 36 years ago, the Archdiocese of Chicago announced Wednesday.

In a letter to members of Christ the King parish, Cardinal Blase Cupich said the Rev. Larry Sullivan will live away from the parish while the allegation is investigated.

Cupich said the archdiocese's Office for Child Abuse Investigations and Review learned of the allegation against Sullivan this week. The allegation has been referred to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the Cook County state's attorney's office.

"Allegations are claims that have not been proven as true or false," Cupich wrote. "Therefore, guilt or innocence should not be assumed."

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Sullivan, in a letter emailed to parishioners Monday, said he became aware of an accusation against him that had been posted on social media. Sullivan wrote that in 1984 while working at a fast-food restaurant he made comments to a female employee that upset her, resulting in her parents and police being contacted. He said there was no physical contact between him and the woman.

"I was then, and am now, ashamed and deeply sorry that my words caused pain and hardship to her," the pastor wrote in the letter posted on the parish website. "I pray

that my accuser accepts my sincere apology and that it provides her with healing.”

Sullivan has been pastor at Christ the King on Chicago Southwest Side since 2014, according to the archdiocese. Before that was pastor at St. Christina in Chicago from 2008 until 2014. He was pastor for 16 years at St. Celestine in Elmwood Park.