



DIOCESE OF STEUBENVILLE

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Former Diocesan Comptroller Reaches Plea Agreement

A plea agreement was reached today by former Diocese of Steubenville comptroller David Franklin and the United States attorney's office for the Southern District of Ohio. Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton said, "We are grateful to the work of all of the public officials who were involved in this complex investigation. David Franklin greatly compromised the diocese's ability to exercise its compassion of service including assisting our brothers and sisters in need. We also want to thank our parishioners, priests, deacons, and all our religious as well as chancery staff for their patience during this two year investigation."

Franklin pled guilty to willful failure to account for and pay over employment tax, making and subscribing a false return and wire fraud.

Franklin agreed to pay restitution in the amount of nearly \$300,000 to the Diocese of Steubenville. Additional restitution can be ordered by the judge. Franklin could also receive up to 28 years in prison. Sentencing will occur at a later date.

Following Franklin's retirement in 2017, the diocese began to discover many irregularities in the diocese's accounting records and financial reports. An independent accounting firm determined that more than \$2.7 million in federal taxes were withheld from employees but not paid to the IRS for tax years 2004-16.

The diocese paid back all the taxes owed to the IRS, state and local taxing agencies in addition to interest on the unpaid taxes.

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