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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 1, 2010

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**\*CRIMINAL CASE UPDATE\***

**PRIEST SENTENCED TO PRISON IN  
ILLEGAL DRUG SALES, POSSESSION CASE**

RIVERSIDE – A Riverside County Superior Court judge today, March 1, 2010, sentenced a Home Gardens man to state prison on drug-related charges.

Anthony Martinez Garduno, 51, is a priest who was operating "Our Lady of Tepeyac Catholic Church" at his home. Garduno was arrested at his home on Dec. 29, 2009, following an investigation into illegal drug sales at the home.

When Garduno was arrested, Riverside County sheriff's deputies found a small amount of drugs in his pockets as well as more illegal drugs and a stolen .32-caliber semiautomatic pistol during a search of his home.

On Jan. 4, 2010, Garduno pleaded guilty to four felonies and one misdemeanor. The plea was directly to the court and not a plea agreement. Garduno pleaded guilty to one felony count each of possession of methamphetamine for sales, possession of methamphetamine, possession of GHB, and possession of stolen property. The misdemeanor count he plead guilty to is possession of Lorazepam.

Garduno was the victim of a robbery at his home in September during which he was shot. The trial for the five defendants in that case, RIF152654, is still pending.

Today, Judge Gordon Burkhart sentenced Garduno to two years in state prison.

The case, RIF154159, was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Melanie Deutsch.

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