

The United States Attorney's Office

## Southern District of Florida

### Press Release

#### FORMER ST. BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH PARISHIONER CHARGED WITH FILING FRAUDULENT TAX REFUND CLAIMS

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January 13, 2009

##### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Betty N. Stewart, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division, Melissa T. Chedotal, Special Agent in Charge, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, and Robert Parker, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department, announced today the arrest and Indictment of defendant **Pablo Gehr**, 31, of Miami, Florida, on twenty-four counts of making and presenting fraudulent refund claims against the United States, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 287 and 2. Gehr made his initial appearance in federal court today and was released on bond.

According to the Indictment and statements made in court, the defendant orchestrated a scheme during the 2008 tax filing season in which he prepared tax returns, at no cost, for numerous parishioners at St. Brendan's Catholic Church, located in Westchester, Florida. Unbeknownst to the parishioners, Gehr prepared tax returns that contained false deductions and credit amounts, resulting in fraudulent tax refund claims totaling more than \$84,000. Gehr diverted part of the refunds to his personal bank accounts without the parishioners' knowledge or consent.

If convicted, Pablo Gehr faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 5 years as to each of the fraudulent claims counts.

Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of the Internal Revenue Service, the Miami-Dade Police Department and the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. This case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Aurora Fagan.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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