

Catholic school principal fired for racial views

by [David Gibson](#)

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NEW YORK (RNS) The principal of a Catholic grade school in the Bronx that serves mainly black and Latino students has been fired after his racially charged views about minorities made headlines, and the priest who hired him apologized for a "mistake in judgment."

The Archdiocese of New York announced Tuesday that the pastor, the Rev. Eric Rapaglia, had dismissed the principal, Frank Borzellieri, 48, two days after The Daily News published a story about Borzellieri's ties to a white supremacist group and his voluminous writings on racial issues.

Those writings included efforts to ban a biography on the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and a 2004 book in which he says growing black and Hispanic populations in America will lead to a "New Dark Age."

Borzellieri is shown on the cover with a baseball bat in his hands.

"Many of the opinions expressed by Mr. Borzellieri in his writings were found to be incompatible with the philosophy and practices of Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, and with Catholic schools throughout the Archdiocese," Joseph Zwilling, a spokesman for New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan, said in a statement explaining Borzellieri's firing.

Zwilling said the decision to fire Borzellieri was taken by Rapaglia "in consultation" with the archdiocese's schools office. Rapaglia hired Borzellieri two years ago to head the 200-student school and told The News that he knew of his views but didn't "see any cause for concern."

"I knew of him from my last parish," the priest said. "Do I agree with all of it? No. But I think much of it is valuable and logical and reasonable.

"A lot of his ideas would actually benefit minorities," he added.

Rapaglia said Borzellieri was hired in 2009 and that there were no complaints about Borzellieri's views and he did not know of Borzellieri's "political writings" until after the principal was hired.