

Diocese won't turn over files on priest

Author(s): Alicia Fabbre Daily Herald Staff Writer

Date: May 23, 2003

Page: 15

Section: News

Despite a judge's order to do so, officials from the Rockford Catholic Diocese won't be turning over records relating to a former Geneva priest accused of abusing a girl.

Church officials Thursday asked Judge Timothy Sheldon to find them in contempt of court so they can appeal his ruling that the records must be turned over. Sheldon agreed and fined the diocese \$100.

Ellen Lynch, an attorney representing the diocese, declined comment after Thursday's court appearance. The diocese has 30 days to appeal Sheldon's ruling.

Kane County prosecutors requested records relating to any church investigations involving now-defrocked priest Mark **Campobello**. The former Geneva priest was arrested in December after a girl, now 18, claimed **Campobello** sexually abused her while he was a resident priest at St. Peter's Catholic Church.

Campobello faces charges of sexual assault and sexual abuse for the incidents the girl said occurred between January and May of 1999. The girl was 14 at the time of the abuse.

In a hearing last month, diocese officials argued turning over secret memos allowed under church law and other internal documents would violate the church's Constitutional right to a separation of church and state.

Assistant State's Attorney Jody Gleason said she is uncertain how the diocese's appeal will affect the pending criminal case against **Campobello**.

"We'll have to do some research to find out," Gleason said.

Campobello will appear before Sheldon again on June 26 for a status hearing. Gleason expects to further discuss the fate of **Campobello**'s criminal case on that date.

© Copyright Daily Herald, Paddock Publications, Inc.

[Click here to go back.](#)