

Investigation into priest continues Prosecutors, police hope girl's allegation against former pastor at St. Peter's Church is only one

Author(s): Alicia Fabbre Daily Herald Staff Writer
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Page: 1
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Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki Wednesday urged anyone who either witnessed sexual abuse by a former Geneva priest - or may have been a victim of abuse - to come forward.

Mark A. **Campobello**, 37, was arrested Tuesday after allegations that he inappropriately touched a 14-year-old girl while he was a resident priest at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Geneva.

He is charged with five counts of criminal sexual assault and five counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse that the girl, now 18, says occurred between January and May of 1999 when she was a student at St. Peter Elementary School, Geneva Police Lt. Joe Frega said.

Campobello was released after posting \$7,500 bond. His next scheduled court date is Jan. 9.

Prosecutors and investigators would not provide details about where the alleged incidents occurred, but Frega said they all happened within the city limits.

Though investigators are uncertain if there are any other victims, Gorecki urged victims or anyone with information about the incidents to contact prosecutors or Geneva police.

"Please come forward to assist us in the prosecution of this matter," Gorecki said.

Frega said police have not interviewed any other victims or witnesses to any of the alleged incidents. Police began investigating the complaint in late October after the girl contacted police through an attorney.

"We hope there are none," Frega said of other possible victims. "Certainly we are cognizant to the possibility that some may come forward, but we certainly hope this is an isolated case in Geneva."

He said no one has contacted police since news of **Campobello's** arrest was made public in Wednesday's local papers.

At a press conference, Gorecki praised officials from the Rockford Diocese for cooperating with the investigation and quickly removing **Campobello** from his duties as a parochial administrator at St. James Parish in Belvidere.

"We pledge to cooperate with authorities in the investigation of this case so as to assure that justice is done," said Owen Phelps, director of communication for the diocese.

Gorecki and Frega could not provide details about what prompted the girl, who lives in Geneva, to contact authorities.

Campobello, who was ordained in 1991, served as a parochial vicar at St. Peter's in 1994. He was a resident priest and often said Mass at the church. **Campobello** also served as assistant principal and spiritual director at Aurora Central Catholic High School during that time.

Officials from St. Peter's Catholic Church could not be reached for comment. **Campobello's** father, Richard, who resides in Crystal Lake, declined comment.

Anyone with information should call the Kane County State's Attorney's Office at (630) 232-3500 or Geneva Police at (630) 232- 4736.