

## Monsignor must give deposition

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GENEVA – Monsignor Joseph Jarmoluk still must give a deposition in sex-abuse lawsuits against the Rockford Diocese relating to former priest Mark Campobello, a judge ruled Thursday.

The order by Circuit Judge Keith Brown came in response to a request by Jarmoluk's attorney, Canice Timothy Rice Jr., for sanctions against attorney Michael Brooks, who represents Campobello's victims.

In Jan. 16 court filings, Rice stated that Brooks violated a 2005 protective order in the cases, which barred release of sensitive information, when he told reporters that Jarmoluk was scheduled for a deposition.

Rice claimed that Brooks' identification of Jarmoluk as a witness hurt the chances of finding a jury to hear the case and "serves to reinforce the public's unfounded suspicions that [Jarmoluk] somehow failed to detect or to report Campobello's crimes."

Jarmoluk was appointed pastor in 1997 and became monsignor at St. Peter Church in Geneva in 2000. The molestation charges against Campobello related to incidents in 1999.

"I believe the motion has no merit," Brooks said Thursday, adding that Brown struck most of Rice's proposed sanctions and ordered Jarmoluk's deposition to go forward.

Brooks declined to comment further on the case. Jarmoluk did not return a phone call seeking comment.

According to court records, Brown scheduled a March hearing on Rice's accusations, while also setting parameters for how a videotape of Jarmoluk's deposition would be handled. He also declined to bar Brooks from participating in the monsignor's questioning.

A trial has been scheduled for October.

Rice filed his complaint three days before Jarmoluk was scheduled to give his deposition in St. Charles. Rice's motion specifies the deposition date as Jan. 19, but newspaper stories included in his motion do not indicate Brooks specified the date.

Rice seeks a hearing where he could call witnesses to determine whether Brooks disclosed the date, place and time of Jarmoluk's deposition to anyone. He claimed doing so would be "most unfair" if Jarmoluk were approached by the news media or protesters, who might consider his refusal to answer questions a sign of guilt, according to court records.

Rice, who could not be reached for comment Thursday, also filed paperwork to represent Jarmoluk on Jan. 16 – almost five months after Jarmoluk said he would no longer retain Rice as his attorney.

In an August letter to parishioners and under a directive from Bishop Thomas Doran – who is named in the lawsuits – Jarmoluk stated he had "discharged" Rice. It is not clear how long Rice previously represented Jarmoluk, although Rice authored a report released in June 2004 that determined Jarmoluk acted properly in his handling of sex-abuse against Campobello.

Campobello, 42, is serving an eight-year prison sentence after pleading guilty in 2004 to sexually abusing two women during his time at St. Peter and later at Aurora Central Catholic High School. He is eligible for parole in February 2008.

The women were teenage students at the schools when the abuse occurred, and now are in their early 20s. They have sued Campobello, Doran and the Rockford Diocese.

A default judgment had been ordered against Campobello after he failed to respond to the lawsuits. The diocese and Doran, accused of failing to do a background check on Campobello when he was hired, have denied any wrongdoing.