

Sex-abuse victim to sue ex-priest, church

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ST. CHARLES - A woman who was molested by a former Geneva priest is expected to sue the priest and the Rockford Diocese.

The unidentified woman, now 19, claims in the lawsuit that Mark **Campobello** caused her "enduring emotional and psychological damages" during a four-month period from January to April 1999.

According to the lawsuit, **Campobello** was a guest in the victim's home for family gatherings beginning when she was 9 or 10 years old and became a "trusted and esteemed guest of her parents."

He accompanied the family on vacations and became the victim's confidant, the suit states.

The victim, referred to in the lawsuit as "Jane Doe," was 14 at the time of the incidents in 1999, when **Campobello** used his position of trust, authority and confidence to "engage plaintiff in a 'romantic' relationship whereby he induced her to permit him to kiss her and sexually abuse her," the lawsuit states.

A month after **Campobello** was arrested in October 2002 on the charges, he was stripped of his pastoral duties.

In the lawsuit, filed by Joliet attorney Keith M. Aeschliman, the victim seeks \$50,000 in compensatory damages from **Campobello** and \$50,000 in damages from the diocese. Also named in the

lawsuit is Diocese Bishop Thomas Doran. Unspecified punitive damages also are sought.

Campobello, 39, pleaded guilty May 13 after admitting he had sexual relations with a 16-year-old girl who attended Aurora Central Catholic High School and the plaintiff, who was a student at St. Peter Catholic School in Geneva.

At the time of the incidents, **Campobello** lived at St. Peter and was the assistant principal and spiritual director of Aurora Central.

Campobello was sentenced to eight years in prison and began serving his sentence May 28.

In the suit, the victim also accuses the diocese of negligence, including failing to "adequately investigate and evaluate **Campobello's** suitability for interaction with adolescents" and failing to adopt policies concerning "permissible interaction of diocesan personnel with the adolescents to enable other adults to detect and recognize situations likely to be conducive to sexually inappropriate or abusive conduct."

Diocese representatives were unavailable for comment.

In a statement, Aeschliman said the case will prove Doran and the Diocese should have known **Campobello** should not be a priest.

"Bishop Doran and his agents knew or should have known of the dangers and exploitive propensities of **Campobello** and that he was an unfit agent to act as a priest," Aeschliman said.

"The discovery process which will be conducted during the course of this litigation should permit the parties and the public to learn the truth regarding who knew what and when."