

Protecting the wrong guy

Publication Kane County Chronicle
Date August 17, 2004
Section(s) Column
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Last May, former priest Mark **Campobello** pleaded guilty to aggravated criminal sexual abuse of two teenage girls. The abuse occurred while **Campobello** worked at churches and schools in Geneva and Aurora, and his case had been marked by clashes and controversy from the start. It appears it continues to do so.

This past Friday, Kane County judge Tim Sheldon ruled that the Diocese of Rockford doesn't have to release internal church documents related to **Campobello**, even though the diocese had been ordered to do so by the 2nd District Appellate Court. Sheldon's reasoning was that since **Campobello** already had been convicted and sentenced, the request to release records had become moot.

Sheldon has more than likely made the correct legal decision, and that's really not in question. What still is in question is the diocese's intransigent stance throughout this whole awful affair. As protective as have they been of **Campobello** and his records, they have all but ignored his acts and his victims. Although the diocese claims to be concerned about the problem of sexual abuse by priests, their actions seem to indicate they are more interested in their own image.

Mark **Campobello** is a sexual predator, and he preyed on young, impressionable girls. If anything, you'd think the diocese would want to open all of his records for review by authorities to determine if he had committed other such acts. To keep them locked away, indeed, to fight their release, could mean important information is being withheld. Church members can't be blamed if they start to wonder just whose side their leaders are on.