

Abuse testimony made public

Priest details raping teen-ager

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A Catholic priest's testimony about accusations that he sexually abused a boy in Fairfax three decades ago has been made public by a Rapid City judge.

Earlier this week, Circuit Judge John Konenkamp unsealed parts of a deposition by the Rev. William Lambert of Rapid City, who has admitted that he raped Sioux Falls businessman Bob Koenig when he was growing up in Fairfax.

Koenig filed a civil suit against Lambert on Aug. 10 in Rapid City, in which he charged Lambert with repeatedly sexually abusing him from 1958 to 1975. Koenig also is seeking unspecified damages from the Catholic Diocese of Rapid City, claiming negligent hiring and supervision, among other things.

Neither Koenig nor Lambert could be reached for comment Friday. In his deposition, the Catholic priest admitted he tied up, handcuffed and raped a 12- to



Rev. William Lambert

13-year-old Koenig 34 years ago.

Lambert also said he had sexual relations with as many as five other boys.

"Probably four that I asked and one ... two that asked me," he said.

In his lawsuit, Koenig said he was forced to confess the abuse to at least 17 priests — none of whom tried to stop it.

In his deposition, Lambert, 69, testified he could only recall 12 occasions in which he had sexual relations with Koenig. After each time, Lambert said both of them went to confession, but he could only remember up to four priests they confessed their acts to.

"Did any of the priests to whom you'd give confession — and I'm talking about after the confession — did any of them ever counsel you or contact you or talk to you about your relationship with the young men?" Koenig's lawyer, Rick Johnson of Gregory, asked Lambert.

"They couldn't do that unless I asked them, and I didn't ask

them," Lambert said. "... Once the confession is over, they're bound by the seal. They just can't do anything about it."

Lambert said he warned Koenig on a trip to Sturgis that a priest there might try to solicit sex from him. He said the priest apparently rebuffed Koenig when he was asked for a payment first.

Lambert also said psychiatrists he has sought treatment from have suggested that sexual abuse he suffered as a child may have influenced his advances toward Koenig.

Lambert said two 14-year-old boys forced themselves on him when he was 14.

"I think the one individual resembled Bob in a couple of ways," Lambert testified.

Konenkamp blacked out references in the deposition to other children who might have been abused by Lambert, or who were brought up in questioning by Johnson.

Lambert's lawyer, Joe Butler, did not return a phone call Friday. But Jeff Viken, lawyer for the Rapid City Diocese, said he doesn't believe the unsealing of the priest's deposition will impact his client's standing in the lawsuit.