

Priest to plead guilty to sex abuse

By Michael Hirsley

Religion writer

A Kankakee priest has agreed to plead guilty to sexually molesting a minor, and Indiana prosecutors will drop a lesser sexual-misconduct charge against him if an Indiana judge accepts the plea bargain.

Rev. Myles White is scheduled to appear March 5 before Marshall County Superior Court Judge Eugene Chipman Sr., who will either accept the agreement or reject it and order the case to trial.

White, 51, was suspended as pastor of St. Martin of Tours Church in July after he was charged. A videotape allegedly showing him having sex with a teenage boy had been turned over to county authorities.

Provisions of the plea agreement, which the court clerk's office said was filed Jan. 5, call for White to serve a 5-year sentence

in an Indiana prison, with a year suspended, followed by one-year probation and counseling at a rehabilitation center in Maryland.

White will plead guilty to a felony sexual-molestation charge, said Marshall County Deputy Prosecutor Curtis Palmer. If Chipman agrees to it, Palmer said, "I would ask that he [White] ought to go to prison right away."

The agreement provides that White's sentence may be imposed concurrently with any that might result from prosecution in Illinois.

Another case is pending against the priest in Will County Circuit Court, where a California couple sued White for \$5 million in December.

They claim that their son, who committed suicide in 1990, was sexually abused by White when he was assigned to St. Isaac Jogues parish in Hinsdale more than 20

years ago.

White is one of four priests removed from parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Joliet in the last five years because of sexual-abuse allegations.

The Indiana investigation of White stemmed from a videotape he donated to a flea market in Culver, Ind., where he owns a home. A friend of Palmer bought the video, which began with footage of a local parade but included 30 minutes of an earlier taping, allegedly of White having sex with a boy.

After the video was turned over to authorities, Marshall County sheriff's deputies went to the priest's Kankakee rectory, where they said they found him trying to destroy photographs of other boys, some nude, taken on outings with White.