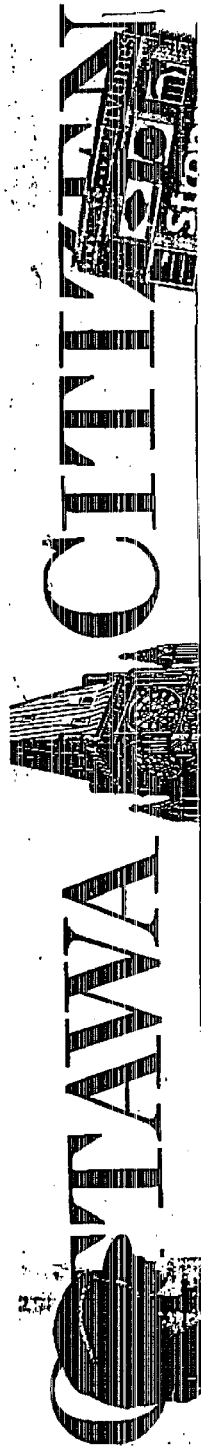


7100711

SEP 10 2001 10:15 FR SDF OPP LONG SAULT

TO 9-17053296333 P.06



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2001 ESTABLISHED 1845 EST. 63¢ GST / \$1.37 GST IN OUTLIER AREAS

# 'Others' involved in sex abuse: priest

## Catholic priest admits others in diocese confided in him about abuse of boys in Cornwall

BY AARON SANDS

CORNWALL — A prominent Roman Catholic priest charged with sex crimes under Project Truth confessed in court yesterday that he has long been aware of a group of pedophiles in the Cornwall community.

Under cross-examination while testifying in his de-

fence, Father Paul Lapierre, 72, repeatedly denied taking part in a sex ring, but told court that priests in the tightly knit diocese, along with others, confided in him over the years about the sexual abuse of boys in Eastern Ontario.

He said he never felt compelled to report the crimes to police. Two weeks ago, the Ontario Provincial Police concluded the four-year Project Truth investigation by stating no pedophile ring ever existed in Cornwall.

It was the fourth investigation into allegations of widespread sexual abuse of boys in Cornwall over the past five decades.

The first three produced no charges.

Project Truth resulted in 115 charges against 15 men, but police said there was no evidence to substantiate allegations from at least 69 complainants that the alleged offenders were in any way connected.

The cries of "coverup" persist from MPP Garry Guzzo, a former judge, and former Cornwall police Const. Perry Dunlop, the decorated officer who blew the whistle on the case and lost his career for it.

Mr. Guzzo, MPP for Ottawa West-Nepean, has threatened to name the "kingpins" of the alleged ring — none of whom were charged — in the Legislature. After the testimony yesterday, OPP Det. Insp. Pat Hall, the lead investigator on Project Truth, said he must wait until the trial is over to comment.

Mr. Guzzo could not be reached for comment last night.

See TRUTH on page A2

Project Truth: Critic fined for contempt, C3