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## **Alleged Abuse Victim Sues Diocese**

By Carol Demare  
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ALBANY - Another alleged victim of the Rev. David Bentley came forth Tuesday, claiming he was repeatedly abused by the pedophile priest and saying he is seeking \$4 million in a lawsuit filed in Boston.

Michael Cleveland, 34, of Albany, said he was one of four brothers victimized by Bentley when the priest served in various capacities in the Albany diocese.

"Starting at age 11, Father Bentley abused me and raped me in the worst possible way," Cleveland said at a news conference at the North Greenbush home of attorney John Aretakis.

He said Bentley taught him to fish, and the relationship soon turned to sexual abuse. The incidents occurred from 1982 through 1986 in Albany, Schenectady and on Bentley's boat in Boston Harbor and on Saratoga Lake, he said.

Besides Bentley, the lawsuit names Bishop Howard J. Hubbard and the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese.

The bishop "removed David Bentley from active ministry ... in 2002 after investigating allegations and determining there was reasonable cause to believe he had sexually abused minors," diocesan spokesman Ken Goldfarb said.

Cleveland said his brothers received a settlement, but he didn't. Goldfarb said the diocese does not make settlement details public.

"For me, I don't feel the money is an issue," Cleveland said. "But it will help me get appropriate counseling. It can help make my life better to deal with the past experience."

Goldfarb said the diocese "received a complaint from Michael Cleveland in 2000, and, as is our policy, and irrespective of culpability, we offered him counseling assistance. Mr. Cleveland's original complaint made no mention of the incidents he now alleges took place in Massachusetts. We will investigate these complaints and respond accordingly."

Cleveland, who said he came from a troubled childhood and is now a self-employed contractor, was married April 27. His wife, Angela, 27, sat at his side.

Aretakis said Bentley, 63, lives in Oswego County with a relative.