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Franciscan Priest Named in Lawsuit

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ALBANY, N.Y. - A 40-year-old man who claims he was abused as a boy by a member of a Roman Catholic religious order filed a \$5 million lawsuit against church officials.

Mark Lyman of Stillwater, N.Y., claims he was sexually abused beginning at age 13 by Frank Genevive, a priest whom he met when he was a Franciscan brother assigned to St. Anthony's Church in Troy, N.Y. The civil lawsuit, filed last week in Boston, alleges that the abuse occurred during trips to that city and at other locations over several years.

Genevive, reached at a friary in Wappingers Falls, had no comment on the lawsuit. Officials with the Franciscan order named as a co-defendant said they would not comment on the lawsuit because they had not read it. But Father Robert Campagna of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception in New York City said Genevive was removed from public ministry when allegations first surfaced against him a few years ago. He has no access to children, Campagna said.

The lawsuit also names the Albany diocese and Bishop Howard Hubbard, claiming the bishop allowed Genevive to remain in active ministry despite knowing he abused children.

A spokesman for the Albany diocese, Ken Goldfarb, said the bishop had "absolutely" no knowledge of any allegations against Genevive until Lyman made a complaint to the district a year or two ago.

"At that time we referred the matter to the religious order of the priest," Goldfarb said. As a member of the Franciscan order, Genevive was never under the direct supervision of the diocese, Goldfarb said.

Lyman said he decided to come forward now because, as a father of four children, he wants to make sure no other children are exposed to abusive priests. He is represented by attorney John Aretakis, a fierce critic of Hubbard who has brought several sex-abuse lawsuits against the diocese.

The Albany diocese is investigating sexual misconduct allegations against nine current and former priests. A report released last week claims the diocese is complying with a national church program aimed at combatting sex abuse.

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