



Charles Picot

Charles Picot appeals cases

CANADAEAST NEWS SERVICE

FREDERICTON ► A former priest ordered to stand trial again after he was acquitted last year on a decades-old charge of sexual interference has filed notice he plans to appeal the matter to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Charles Picot, who served as a priest in Campbellton and Dalhousie was acquitted last year of a 1975 charge of indecent assault on a boy who was 13. Picot was parish priest at Saint-Jean-Baptiste Roman Catholic Church in Dalhousie at the time.

Picot was acquitted on March 3, 2010 when the trial judge said that the victim's testimony was not corroborated. The judge did not dismiss Michael Jensen's testimony as unbelievable. Jensen did not want a publication ban placed on his name.

But in a split decision earlier this year, the New Brunswick Court of Appeal ordered a new trial in the case.

Justice Richard Bell, giving the reasons for himself and Justice Kathleen A. Quigg, ruled that a new trial was in order.

"The trial judge's conclusion that Mr. Jensen's testimony lacked corroboration simply does not square with the evidence and with

his own findings. That being the case, I am of the view he erred by concluding that corroborative or confirmatory evidence must be directly related to one or more of the essential elements of the charge," Bell wrote.

Justice J.C. Marc Richard wrote a dissenting opinion indicating that he would have let the acquittal stand.

In August, Picot was sentenced to eight months in jail after being found guilty of a sex assault dating back several decades against Derek Lapointe, who also did not want a publication ban placed on his name. That decision is being appealed to the New Brunswick Court of Appeal.