

# Motions delay hearing into priest's death

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Testimony in a preliminary hearing into the murder of Angers, Que., parish priest Roger Rinfret was delayed by legal arguments for six hours in a Hull court yesterday.

Alain McMurtie, 20, of Hull was accused of the priest's murder last month after Rinfret's body was found in a blood-spattered Gatineau motel room March 31.

McMurtie's defence counsel, Luc Marchildon, presented two motions for postponement of the hearings and then took a third motion, which was refused, to Superior Court Judge Charles Major.

## Coroner criticized

Marchildon is awaiting response on the first motion, which questions the credibility of coroner Gaston Tremblay, who presided over the initial murder inquest. The motion requests annulment of a one-year contempt of court sentence laid against McMurtie by the coroner.

Crown prosecutor Francois Hanfield called three witnesses late yesterday afternoon at the hearing which will determine if there is sufficient evidence against McMurtie to send the case to trial.

McMurtie, arrested last month, faces a mandatory 25 years in prison if found guilty of first-degree murder.

A tangled tale of homosexuality unfolded at the inquest. It was alleged in testimony that the priest paid \$20 for sexual favors from McMurtie and a juvenile companion.

The Gatineau juvenile, who is the prime Crown witness in the case, took the witness stand for the prosecution yesterday.

## Agreed to price

The youth, who appeared tanned and fit, told the court how he and McMurtie agreed to a \$20 price for sexual favors with Rinfret the night of his murder.

The young man testified that he watched McMurtie repeatedly stab the clergyman until he was dead, and then said the pair stole Rinfret's money.

Yesterday, McMurtie, who remains in prison on the contempt charge, appeared in court with his once-shoulder-length hair cut short and dressed in a clean sweater and jeans.

His mother, two sisters and one aunt sat in the courtroom audience.

The defence will cross-examine the juvenile when the court hearing resumes this morning.

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