

Police mix with mourners

By Janet Cotton

JOURNAL REPORTER

Tearful mourners knelt beside the open casket of murdered parish priest Roger Rinfret last night. Among them were detectives searching for clues in the bizarre slaying.

At St. Joseph's church in Hull last night, mourners young and old, prayed beside Rinfret's casket. The detectives stationed in the church were hopeful that the killer, or someone who knew of the murder, might break down at the display of the body.

Rinfret's vestments were laid on a podium beside the casket.

Seal of silence

The Gatineau detectives, who say "the public already knows too much" about the murder through media reports, have placed a seal of silence on the case.

But they told the *Journal* yesterday that the priest was either killed immediately or soon after he checked in alone to room 10 of the Motel Ritz on Greber Boulevard last Sunday night.

The priest, from Ange-Gardien parish in Angers, was found stabbed 13 times in the hotel room by a cleaning woman just after noon Monday. He was last seen alive about 10:45 p.m. Sunday, when he

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rented the room, only 20 kilometres from the safety of his large, stone parish home.

"He died Sunday," said police investigator Pat Burns, who refused to reveal what the murder weapon was. "So it wasn't too long after he got into the room that it happened."

No suspects

Burns, one of two investigators working full time on the case, said there "are no suspects and no motives, but we're working."

"We know that we're on the right track," said Burns. "We know what we're looking for."

Burns said he is "taking seriously" a phone call that foretold of Rinfret's death Sunday night.

"We're going to check it all out with Bell, and if we can prove that the call came in Sunday, then it's a whole different game."

A receptionist at the French daily *Le Droit* says she received a phone call about 10 p.m. Sunday from a man who wanted "to know details about Father Rinfret's death" and described himself as "an intimate friend" of the priest.

Burns said police will not comment on the case again until "the killer is named" because "too much is getting out."

"Too much has already been leaked out," he said. "It's the toughest investigation we've ever had."

"Just try to get anyone to tell you anything about a clergyman, especially anything private, or maybe disfavorable."

"They're just not willing to talk," said Burns, who is investigating the youth and marriage encounter

groups with which the priest worked.

Burns said he is "looking for a person" in connection with the stabbing, but admitted, "It's more likely to be a man."

The priest, who worked with local youth and handicapped groups will be taken home to Angers today. He will rest in the secondary school until Easter Monday, when Hull Bishop Adolphe Proulx celebrates the high mass.

Rinfret will be buried in the parish cemetery, directly behind his home.

Long heroin trial ends in conviction

By Paula McLaughlin

JOURNAL REPORTER

More than 16 months after court proceedings began, a 30-year-old Ottawa man was found guilty this week of attempting to import 21 grams of heroin to Canada from Thailand.

Judge Bernard Ryan ordered Robert Holtom, of Burnside Avenue, held in custody until April 30 when he will be sentenced.

Referring to how Holtom's trial has dragged on, Ryan said it was "most unfortunate that trials of any length can't be commenced and completed quickly." He blamed most of the delays on problems surrounding the scheduling of provincial court time.

Holtom was charged in May, 1978, with attempting to import heroin through an elaborate scheme in which small bags containing the