

Popular priest found murdered in motel room

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By Journal Reporters

The Roman Catholic parish of Angers today is mourning the death of its priest, found murdered Monday in a Gatineau motel room.

Though police have dropped a tight seal of silence over the case, sources say an autopsy report to be released later today shows that Father Roger Rinfret, 49, was stabbed and strangled to death in the motel room.

His fully-clothed body was discovered at about 1 p.m. by a cleaning woman in Room 10 at the Ritz Motel, 137 Greber Blvd., less than a block from Gatineau police headquarters. The motel's owners too are saying

little about the murder but Hull Bishop Adolphe Proulx said the slain priest was last seen alive on Sunday night after a dinner with friends in Hull.

"I'm as mystified as anyone," said Proulx, who was called by police Monday to identify the body.

"I understand the motive was theft. It just couldn't be anything else. There was no one who disliked Father Rinfret," he said.

The priest sometimes stayed at local motels when "he was too tired to risk the drive home," the bishop said.

Proulx will officiate at Rinfret's funeral. See Slain priest, Page 2



Father Roger Rinfret was a 'friend to everyone.'



Priest's body found in Greber Boulevard motel room

Slain priest sought 'peace'

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funeral next Monday at 10:30 a.m. in Angers.

Paul Bouladier, a Hull Diocese spokesman, speculated that Rinfret may have been at the motel to "relax" and to "have some peace" after a busy weekend with youth or marriage encounter groups.

'Loved life'

Bouladier said he was told by police that Rinfret's killers had apparently been thieves.

The murder has left an aching hole in the lives of parishioners who knew Rinfret as a friendly flurry of activity in local happenings.

"He was a friend to everyone who knew him," said Jean-Marie Caron, one of six parish councillors who worked with Rinfret.

"I knew him for six years," Caron

said. "He loved life. He was always happy. He was close to children. People here are deeply grieved."

Rinfret was active in both boy scouts and girl guides, although he wasn't a real sports lover, Caron said.

"I'm going to miss him," said a 13-year-old girl who was playing ball with a small group of children in the church courtyard yesterday.

"He was a very good priest. He always talked and joked with us," said another ballplayer.

Served in Touraine

The priest, ordained at St. Pius X in Ottawa on Feb. 8, 1957, was later a professor of Marie Mediatrix Classical College in Hull.

He became parish priest of Ange-Gardien Church in Angers 1½ years ago after serving at Touraine's St.

Mathews parish from 1971 to 1978.

Rinfret's death was the second slaying of a priest in the Ottawa-Hull area in the past four years.

The stabbing death of Father Leslie Scriven, also 49, on Oct. 1, 1976 remains unsolved.

Scriven, described as "quiet and studious," left St. Paul's University, where he was studying, shortly before suppertime for a walk along the Rideau Canal-Queen Elizabeth Driveway.

His body was found by a doctor walking his dog early the next morning.

Five months before his death, Scriven said he had life all figured out.

"I have no identity crisis. I know who I am. I have no faith crisis. I know what I believe," Scriven wrote in his personal papers.