

# Sexual misconduct charge filed against retired priest

**By DAVE DALEY**  
**Times Staff Writer**

A retired Roman Catholic priest from Sauk Centre was formally charged Wednesday with criminal sexual misconduct for allegedly sexually abusing a mentally retarded man last summer in Waite Park.

The priest, the Rev. Raoul Gauthier, long-time chaplain at the Sauk Centre hospital, was ordered to appear in Stearns County Court Dec. 13 to face a charge of criminal sexual conduct in the fourth degree.

But it now appears doubtful that Gauthier, who left Minnesota for Canada after a police investigation into the misconduct allegation began, will return to the United States.

"He'll be staying in Canada," one

source close to the investigation said. "He's not coming back."

Gauthier, 76, was born in Quebec and retained his Canadian citizenship even after becoming chaplain in Sauk Centre in 1952. Gauthier is now apparently living in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan.

The complaint filed Wednesday in Stearns County Court alleges that Gauthier sexually abused a 37-year-old retarded Waite Park man he picked up at a Waite Park business on Aug. 18.

The man is a ward of the state, according to the complaint.

The criminal sexual conduct in the fourth degree charge, which involves sexual touching, is punishable by not more than five years in prison.