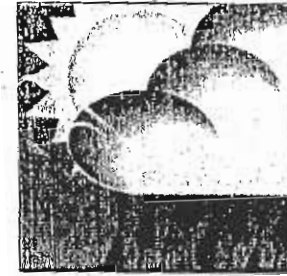


THE MIDDLETOWN Journal

CONTINUING TO SERVE THE MIDDLETOWN AREA IN THE NEW CENTURY



Today's
forecast
Chance of showers
High: 65 Low: 50
Weather/A10

50 CENTS

Judge grants Mentrup delay

Priest given more time to recover from wound

By Lauren Pack
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A judge has given a Middletown priest more time to recover from injuries before appearing in court to face his alleged attacker. But the judge made it clear the priest will be treated no differently from any other witness subpoenaed to court. The Rev. Charles Mentrup, 41, was stabbed in the stomach during the early morning hours of May 5 allegedly by Marcus Finefrock, 25, of Columbus. Middletown police

believe Finefrock used a steak knife from Mentrup's home to stab the priest who is also principal of Fenwick High School. Mentrup has told police he can't testify against his alleged attacker because the stabbing occurred during a confessional. But he did allegedly identify to police Finefrock as the person who stabbed him. Finefrock is charged with felonious assault. Finefrock's attorney Clyde Bennett filed motions Friday in Middletown Municipal Court requesting the case against his client be

dismissed for lack of evidence and because "the alleged victim has grounds to refuse to testify under the Ohio Priest-Penitent Privilege." Attorney John D. Smith, who is representing Mentrup, also filed a motion to throw out Mentrup's subpoena or postpone Monday's preliminary hearing because the priest is not physically able to testify. Wall granted that motion and continued the hearing to 1:30 p.m. May 25. Smith assured pending any further medical problems, his client would be in attendance.

See PRIEST/A2



Marcus Finefrock, right, and his attorney Clyde Bennett listen as Middletown Municipal Court Judge Mark W. Wall decides on defense motions during a preliminary hearing Monday.

Gary Stelzer/Middletown Journal

Danger in the back yard

Sorg closes Middletown