

Charges Issued Against DuBourg Teacher

By Bill Bryan
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

Jerome B. Robben, a history teacher at Bishop DuBourg High School, was charged Thursday with 19 counts of promoting child pornography and one count of sodomy. The charges involve three current and former male students of the school, at 5850 Eichelberger Street.

The 20 warrants were issued by Circuit Attorney George Peach.

Robben, 44, and another DuBourg teacher, the Rev. James A. Funke, were charged last week in St. Louis County with one count each of deviate sexual assault involving a 16-year-old male student.

Funke, a Catholic priest who is also the associate pastor at St. Bernadette

Church at 68 Sherman Road in Lemay, is not involved in the city investigation.

St. Louis County police said they were continuing to investigate Funke, whose rectory is in their jurisdiction.

The child-pornography charges against Robben stem from eight homemade videotapes seized from his home in the 5100 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, Peach said. The 19 counts correspond to 19 incidents involving the three teen-agers, who are shown on film committing sex acts. All filming was done in Robben's home, authorities said.

The sodomy charge involves a homosexual act committed between Robben and one of the teens who is on tape, Peach added.

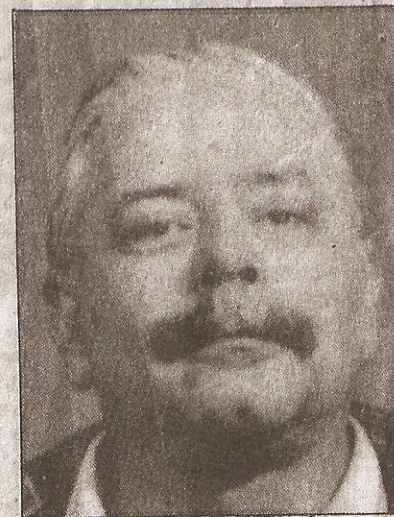
The films are believed to have been made within the last three years.

"We are continuing the investigation," said Capt. Charles Alphin, commander of the city's crimes against persons division.

Peach has asked that anyone with information call him or the police.

Funke, 38, is a biology teacher at the school. Police said Funke and Robben did not engage in sexual activities together but apparently had known of the other's activities.

Both teachers have been at DuBourg about seven years and both have been suspended pending disposition of the criminal charges.



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