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by The Associated Press

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A former altar boy who says he was sexually abused by a now deceased Roman Catholic bishop has filed a lawsuit seeking compensation for the suffering he alleges was made worse by a church coverup.

The now grown man from Chicopee identified in court papers as John Doe alleges in the suit filed in Hampden Superior Court that Diocese of Springfield officials, including former Bishop Mitchell Rozanski, engaged in a coverup to protect the reputation of Bishop Christopher Weldon, The Berkshire Eagle [reported](#) Feb. 9.

Weldon served as bishop from 1950 until 1977. He died in 1982.

Rozanski is now Archbishop of St. Louis.

Carolee McGrath, a diocese spokesperson, said the church does not comment on pending litigation.

An independent investigation found last year that allegations of child sexual abuse against Weldon were "unequivocally credible."

The suit alleges that people who work or worked for the diocese played various roles in suppressing the man's initial reports of abuse by Weldon and two other members of the clergy in the 1960s, starting when the child was 9. The coverup continued as late as 2019, the suit alleged.

The suit seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages.

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