

Navy chaplain pleads to forcible sodomy

by UPI

QUANTICO, Va. - An HIV-infected U.S. Navy chaplain who pleaded guilty to forcible sodomy was sentenced Thursday to serve two years in a military prison. Lt. Cmdr. John Thomas Lee, 42, of Burke, Va., accepted a plea agreement with prosecutors that suspended 10 years of a 12-year sentence, dismissed him from the Navy and required him to forfeit future pay and benefits, the Baltimore Sun reported. Lee, a Roman Catholic priest, admitted forcing himself on a gay Naval Academy midshipman whom he counseled and to having sex with an Air Force officer without disclosing he was HIV-positive. During his court martial at the Quantico Marine Corps base, Lee said he had known he was infected with the HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, since at least 2005, but said he used a condom. Prosecutors had sought a 15-year sentence for Lee, who was ordained as a priest in 1993 and began serving as a military chaplain in 1996. He had been charged with aggravated assault, indecent assault, fraternization, forcible and consensual sodomy, and conduct unbecoming an officer. Lee could have been sentenced to life in prison if found guilty of the forcible sodomy charge alone if there were no plea agreement.

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