

Austrian incest trial to begin next week

by UPI

VIENNA - The Austrian woman whose father held her captive and fathered her seven children will be among the first witnesses in the man's trial next week.

In taped testimony, 43-year-old Elisabeth Fritzl will describe her efforts to defend herself by "kicking and screaming" as she was assaulted by her father for the first time at the age of 11, sources close to the investigation told the Sunday Times of London.

Josef Fritzl, 74, goes on trial next week in the regional capital of Sankt Polten for murder, incest, unlawful imprisonment and enslavement after his daughter was found by authorities in a cellar beneath her parents' home in Amstetten where she was held captive for nearly 25 years. One of the children died as an infant and the body allegedly was incinerated by Fritzl, officials said. Three of the children were adopted by Fritzl and his wife Rosemarie.

Fritzl claims his daughter was having sex when she was barely out of her teens, and that he was trying to save her from smoking, drugs and alcohol.

"He is not a monster," Fritzl's lawyer, Rudolf Mayer, said last week. "He loved his daughter in his own way."

In her video testimony, Elisabeth is expected to tell the court how Fritzl began abusing her as a child and that she suffered from psychological problems.

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