

Priest's Killer Believed Psychopathic

HOMER (AP) — A .38 caliber pistol found by a motorist alongside a road just outside the city limits here late Friday is being checked to see if it is the weapon used to kill a Catholic priest at his rectory Thursday.

Police said they are checking ballistics, registration and finger prints to see if there could be a connection to the murder of Rev. Theodore M. Lelieveld.

The Claiborn Parish sheriff said Friday he thinks the killing of a Catholic priest, shot twice through the screen door at his rectory here, was the climax of one psychopath's anti-Catholic campaign.

Sheriff James R. Oakes said the shooting came after series of vandalism attacks on three small Catholic churches here.

"I think there's some connection," said Oakes. "But we don't know what we are looking for."

Rev. Lelieveld, 50, apparently was gunned down when he answered a knock at the front door of the rectory at St. Margaret at 10 o'clock Thursday night.

Services for the 50-year-old priest, who is a native of Holland, is set for Monday morning at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Marksville. Burial will be in the St. Joseph Mausoleum.

It has not been determined if there is any connection between the vandalism and shooting and the activities of Ku Klux Klan members here recently.

Robed and hooded members of the Ku Klux Klan passed out leaflets here recently telling shoppers and passersby that Jimmy Carter is the illegitimate son of Rose Kennedy, mother of Sen. Ted Kennedy and the late President Kennedy and former attorney general Robert Kennedy.

The Democratic nominee for president is better known as the son of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Carter of Plains, Ga.

A police spokesman said several carloads of Klansmen handed out anti-Carter leaflets last Saturday. The spokesman said the protest was polite and peaceful.

A young Vietnamese man staying at the rectory heard the shots which killed the priest,

rushed to the door, but saw only a car speeding away.

Father Lelieveld died en route to a hospital at Shreveport, 50 miles to the southwest.

"Our officer asked him did he see who done it," said Police Chief Clarence W. Nelson. "He said he did. Our officer asked him did he know who it was. He said he didn't. Then he went into a state of shock."

In two incidents of vandalism, someone defaced a bronze crucifix two weeks ago at St. Margaret and last week a wine bottle was thrown through through a stained glass window.

"Someone had taken the crucifix and physically put it across his knee and bent it," said Sheriff Oakes.

Father Lelieveld also served as pastor of a Catholic church in Haynesville, 13 miles to the north, where another crucifix was twisted.

"In a letter to the bishop last week he mentioned that he was having trouble with vandalism and harassment but he didn't go into detail about it," said the Rev. Steve Testa, chancellor of the Alexandria Diocese.

"The bishop realizes that sort of thing happens from time to time and unless it is something outstanding we don't make too much of it," he added. "There was no reason to think it was anything of any great significance."

At nearby Minden, where St. Paul Church also has been damaged by vandals, the Rev. Daniel Walsh said he and Father Lelieveld discussed their problem a few hours before the shooting.

When Father Lelieveld returned to his church and found a window holed by a pellet gun he telephoned Father Walsh and they agreed to confer with police about it. The gunman came first.

Rev. Roger McMullen, Communications Director for the Diocese of Alexandria, said he felt that the Associated Press story carried in Friday's edition of the Alexandria Daily Town Talk on the shooting death of Rev. Theodore M. Lelieveld was an "insult" to the Baptist in the state.

"The linking of Father Lelieveld's death and the vandalism with the fact that the area is



Rev. Theodore Lelieveld: Homer priest killed by gunman.

predominantly Baptist is an insult to the good Baptist people with whom the Catholics have had very cordial relations," Father McMullen said Friday afternoon.

"I personally feel that The Town Talk should print an apology to the Baptist in the same prominent position — on page one — as it did the story on Father Lelieveld's death," Father McMullen added.

The Rev. James L. Stovall, director of the Louisiana Inter-church Conference, which represents churches with an estimated membership of 1.5 million in the state, deplored the shooting.

"We regret that anyone would be so sick or prejudiced to do a thing of this kind," said the Rev. Stovall, who is a United Methodist minister.