Facing Rivoire left daughter of victim feeling 'liberated'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tion and ran many of Canada's residential schools, though he did not work in the residential school system.

Mapsalak said he was abused by Rivoire while working with him at the Co-op store in Naujaat in the 1970s.

He said he wasn't sure at first if he wanted to see Rivoire but that he knew it was an important thing for him to do. His younger brother is also a victim of Rivoire's alleged abuse.

"To at least get in front of him, to talk to him about how much he has hurt me," Mapsalak said.

Mapsalak was part of a delegation of Inuit led by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

in Paris and Lyon last week to pressure France and the Oblates to return Rivoire, 91, to Canada to face a charge of indecent assault RCMP laid against him earlier this year.

Mapsalak said that when he got the chance to meet with Rivoire face to face at the Oblates' headquarters in Lyon, he spoke in Inuktitut, a language he said the priest spoke and understood perfectly while in Naujaat.

He said Rivoire denied abusing Mapsalak and his younger brother.

"I responded, 'You are lying, you know exactly what you did to me and my younger brother," he said. Despite this, Mapsalak

said having the chance to

speak and to sit down with Rivoire after all these years has resulted in some healing.

"The deep hurt that I have ... that I have carried for so long, some of it is lifted," Mapsalak said.

The delegation travelled to France having no idea whether they would get the chance to see the man they say caused so much pain.

They had just pulled into the Lyon train station on Sept. 14 when they were notified by the Oblates that Rivoire had agreed to meet with them.

The meeting came less than 24 hours after the delegation appealed again to French authorities for Rivoire's extradition. That appeal was met with refusal, said Kotierk.

Along with Mapsalak, the late Marius Tungilik also worked at the Co-op store in Naujaat. He was also one of Rivoire's accusers.

Marius' daughter, Tanya Tungilik, travelled to France on behalf of her father, who died in 2012 and who she said wanted to make the trip to meet with his alleged abuser.

Mapsalak and Tungilik spoke with Rivoire separately, with Tungilik speaking with him second.

"I told him who I was, who my father was," she said in an interview with Nunatsiaq News, after the meeting.

"I told him that he ruined my dad's life. That I

don't have a dad anymore because of him."

Then, she left the room, not wanting to hear Rivoire's replies.

"I wanted to say my piece and leave. I didn't want to hear anything of what Rivoire had to say, because I knew it would be all lies. I didn't want to hear any of his lies," said Tungilik.

After she left the room she felt "liberated," she said.

"I just cried the hardest I have for a long time. I cried my heart out just for the relief, the release of anger," she said.

"I finally did it. I did it for my dad. He had wanted to confront Rivoire himself but he never got a chance to before he died."

Tungilik, who also told her father's story to Pope Francis when he visited Iqaluit in July, said facing Rivoire was something she needed to do.

"The weight on my chest was completely lifted," she said.

The delegation returned to Canada on Sept. 16, with a French prosecutor now investigating the possibility of charges being laid against the Oblates for harbouring an accused criminal.

As for the Oblates, they announced last week they've started the process of kicking Rivoire out of their order, which they said could take up to three months.

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