

Suspected priest killer enters plea

1-29-86

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SANTA CRUZ — The suspected killer of Father John Karastamatis pleaded innocent to a murder charge this morning in Municipal Court.

Edward Lee Bowman, 39, stood quietly as his attorney, Public Defender Gerry Christensen, entered the plea and asked that the case return to court in 60 days for setting of a preliminary hearing.

Christensen called it a "huge case" and said he had been presented with voluminous amounts of reports and information from the District Attorney's Office.

Judge Richard McAdams set the next court appearance for March 28. He also kept bail at \$500,000. District Attorney Art Danner raised no objection to the March 28 date but said his office was still reviewing evidence regarding filing special circumstances in the case. Such a filing would make it possible to ask for the death penalty in the case and would require a new plea to be entered.

Bowman was arrested earlier this month after a long police investigation of the murder, which occurred last May. His late wife, Anna, also is suspected in the killing of the popular Greek Orthodox priest. Anna Bowman committed suicide Dec. 14 when police went to question her.