

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
OF NEW JERSEY

DOCKET NO.: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Plaintiffs,

v.

JOSE ALONSO, THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF PATERSON, N.S., and
the CONTINENTAL INSURANCE CO.,
Defendants.

DEPOSITION UPON
ORAL EXAMINATION OF
BISHOP FRANK RODIMER

T R A N S C R I P T of the above-entitled
matter as taken stenographically by and before KAREN
SCIMECA, a Notary Public and Certified Shorthand
Reporter of the State of New Jersey at the offices of
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PATERSON, 777 Valley
Road, Clifton, New Jersey on August 14, 1989,
commencing at 11:00 in the morning.

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MR. [REDACTED] So you really want to know the parish where Monsignor Alonso was in particular. Go ahead, Bishop, the name of that parish or that church.

ⓐ

A It's the cathedral--- I'm not sure exactly. St. John the Baptist, anyway. The Cathedral Parish of St. John the Baptist or Parish of St. John the Baptist, Incorporated.

Q That particular corporation, however, is wholly controlled by the diocese office?

A The state of New Jersey requires that a parish be incorporated with five officers. The bishop is the president, vicar general is the vice president. The pastor or administrator is the secretary treasurer and there are two lay trustees.

Q And they are all the same for all the parishes in New Jersey or your diocese, the lay trustees?

A No. Each parish has its own lay trustees. They're elected each year.

Q Do you know who were the lay trustees for St. John the Baptist Cathedral?

A No.

Q Who makes that election? How does that election come about?

1 A They're nominated by the parish, the pastor, and
2 they are approved annually by either the president or
3 the vice president when the minute books are reviewed
4 and signed.

5 Q There's no stocks for those corporations,
6 are there?

7 A Probably not. I don't think--- there could be
8 but I don't know of any.

9 Q Now, who owns the property? Who owns the
10 property? For example, the building of the cathedral,
11 is that owned by the corporation at St. John the
12 Baptist Parish or is that owned by the diocese?

13 A To the best of my recollection, it's owned by
14 the parish.

15 Q And that would include the school
16 buildings and all the property related to the
17 cathedral?

18 A There's one building on the block that's owned
19 by the diocese. There may be more than that but the
20 rectory, the convent, the school and the church, to the
21 best of my knowledge, are owned by the parish
22 corporation.

23 Q But you as bishop, you are the head of
24 that parish?

25 A President.

Rodimer-direct

1 Q President of that parish?

2 A Right.

3 Q And that's where you as bishop sit?

4 A Well, the chair is there which means that---
5 that's what a cathedral means so the bishop's chair is
6 there and the major feasts of the year, that's where
7 the bishop celebrates.

8 Q Mass and whatever?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And although it is a chair of this
11 diocese, the property belongs to a different entity
12 than property that belongs to the diocese?

13 A That's true.

14 Q To the best of your knowledge?

15 A That's true.

16 Q Coming back to Monsignor Alonso, have you
17 ever heard prior to the incident that we have alleged
18 in this case, prior to that, have you heard of any
19 similar incidents of such conduct by Monsignor Alonso?

20 A ~~There was one accusation that was made in 1984.~~

21 Q And with respect to that accusation, did
22 you pursue an investigation?

23 A I did.

24 Q What was the result of that investigation?

25 A Well, first of all, I spoke with Monsignor

1 Alonso and he denied it. I spoke with the priest of
2 the rectory privately and they also said they had seen
3 no indications of that behavior so the explanation that
4 Monsignor Alonso gave was that it involved a relative,
5 that there was a family problem, family dispute and
6 that this was no more than one aspect of that family
7 dispute.

8 Q This particular person was the [REDACTED] of
9 Monsignor Alonso?

10 A That's correct.

11 Q And did you ever pressure him to speak to
12 Monsignor Alonso's [REDACTED] ?

13 A I spoke with--- to the best of my recollection,
14 I spoke to both parents.

15 Q And did you get a chance to discuss the
16 matter with them after your investigation?

17 A After the investigation, no. Not that I recall.

18 Q Did you take--- what was the--- as a
19 result of the investigation, you accepted Monsignor
20 Alonso's explanation?

21 A Not on face value, I didn't. I was very anxious
22 to find out what the other priests thought and what
23 they observed and they convinced me that there was
24 nothing to it.

25 Q Were--- this was in 1984. The same you