

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