

Chapter Sixteen: Where Are They Now?

In this chapter we offer an update on Bishop Dupre, Richard Lavigne, Rev. James Scahill, Rev. Edward O. Paquette, Rev. James Talbot, and Rev. Bruce Teague.

Bishop Thomas Dupre

In Oct., 2007, Stephanie Barry reported in the Springfield Republican that Dupre was still at St. Luke's Institute (Silver Spring, Maryland). Six months earlier, he had been resisting interrogation in the \$8.5 million settlement trial. However, he eventually testified in a deposition about his role in supervising accused priests of the Diocese.

The deposition was taken in an office building in Baltimore. A lawyer for the North Star Re-Insurance company, Adam Simms, explained that: "I don't like taking depositions in a hospital setting."

It will be remembered that Dupre resigned on Feb. 11, 2004, one day after he was presented with a list of questions about allegations of sexual abuse by the Republican. At the time, the Vatican and the Diocese cited health reasons for his resignation. Diocesan spokesman Mark Dupont said that his resignation one day after the newspaper's inquiry was a "coincidence".

It took about a week for the Boston Globe to discover that the health facility that Dupre had checked himself into was St. Luke's Institute. In the edition of Feb. 20th, 2004, the Globe noted dryly that "...while Dupre has said he had a heart condition, the institute does not have a coronary care unit. It does treat priests with emotional, behavioral, and psychological problems, including those who have sexually abused people..."

The cost of Dupre's hospitalization is a matter of interest, because it could only be supported by church funds. Yet it is unclear how the cost is divided among Diocese, USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), and the Vatican. St. Luke's will not divulge the cost of treatment for Dupre, citing privacy concerns.

However, the cost of a bed for similar mental health facilities averages about 650 dollars a day. On July 11, 2004, it was reported by the Republican that a six-month treatment phase for Dupre was projected by chancery official Msgr. Richard Sniezyk.

Assuming a minimum cost of 500 dollars a day, a month could be expected to cost \$15,000, and a 6 months stay \$90,000.

Officials from the Springfield Diocese have repeatedly said that they follow the guidelines of the USCCB with regard to retired bishops. The guidelines include a monthly stipend of at least \$1,500, appropriate housing and board, complete health insurance benefits, an automobile, all expenses for trips to provincial, regional and national bishops' meetings and workshops as well as possible occasional visits to the Vatican.

Thus, Diocesan benefits for Dupre must amount to at least \$3,000 per month and are probably higher. If the cost of 43 months (Feb. 2004 - Oct. of 2007), at \$3,000 per month (\$129,000), is added to the initial treatment cost of \$90,000, we have a conservative total of \$219,000 for Dupre's support, up to Oct. of 2007. If Diocesan support has continued, the total must be closing in on \$300,000 by now, and is possibly much higher.

But, what has happened since May of 2007 is unclear, since neither the Diocese nor the Vatican have confirmed his continuation at St. Luke's or made any other information available. Even when it was announced in December, 2008 that Dupre would contribute money to the civil settlement toward two of his accusers, the Diocese insisted it had no other information.

It is also unclear if a Federal lawsuit is still pending against Dupre.

On July 11, 2004, it was reported that the Diocese had turned the Dupre investigation over to the Vatican. The Vatican did not respond to inquiries at that time, and nothing has been heard since about church discipline of Dupre.

Although it is customary to pray for retired bishops of the Diocese, Dupre is not mentioned at Sunday Masses in at least some of the parishes of the Diocese. It is not known if this is because of an order from the bishop, or for some other reason. Dupre's name does not appear on printed materials of the Diocese. For example, the Catholic Observer, the official newspaper of the Diocese, has had no substantive news about him in years. And, a recent color brochure promoting vocations to the priesthood mentions Bishop McDonnell and retired Bishop Joseph Maguire – but not Bishop Dupre.

On the Diocesan web site, Bishop Dupre's name does not appear. The following information appears under "History and General Information":

On April 1, 2004 Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell was installed as the 8th

Bishop of Springfield. Retired Bishop Joseph Maguire (5th Bishop of Springfield) continues to reside in the Diocese and take part in the life of the Catholic community here.

Rev. Bruce Teague

It will be recalled that Teague was the whistle-blower priest who objected to Rev. Richard Lavigne, a convicted child molester, hanging around St. Brigid church in the mid-90's. When Lavigne asked to help hear children's confessions, Teague, the pastor at the time, informed the Diocese. When he got no response, he alerted the local police, who issued a trespass order barring Lavigne. Teague said that after his superiors got a copy of the order, he was reprimanded for going outside the church. He was later removed from his post.

Teague is still a priest of the Springfield Diocese. He's been working for many years in pastoral care for hospitals at the eastern end of the state. As of May, 2008, he was listed as a member of parish outreach ministries of the Archdiocese of Boston at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

The following appeared in an article in the Worcester Telegram & Gazette on Aug. 25, 2005. The article is available online at: http://www.snapnetwork.org/news/vatican/vatican_papers_spark_debate.htm

In it, Rev Teague discusses "Crimen Sollicitationis", one of the Vatican decrees dealing with sexual abuse.

The Rev. Bruce Teague, a College of the Holy Cross graduate who is a priest of the Springfield Diocese, said bishops attempted to avoid scandal, particularly at the local level, and did not need Crimen to do it. "Most American bishops, unless they were canon lawyers, would not understand Crimen. It would have had to be interpreted to them by their chief canon lawyers," he said.

Rev. Teague said bishops did not view sexual abuse of minors as a criminal issue but thought it was best handled by sending the priest to treatment. "Their behaviors were similar to Nixon in Watergate and Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky case. Their efforts and their diagnosis proved to be disastrous and destructive to victims and the church," he said.

Canon law dealt with the issue of abusive priests, but American bishops did not even follow church law, Rev.

Teague said. He said bishops still fail to hold themselves accountable for the harm they caused. "Unlike the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the Dallas Norms fail to hold bishops accountable themselves," he said.

Rev. James Scahill

Fr. Scahill continues to be pastor at St. Michael's Parish at 128 Maple St., East Longmeadow.

Rev. Edward O. Paquette, Jr.

Rev. Paquette has never been prosecuted, despite hundreds of credible accusations in three states, because all of the statutes of limitations have expired. Paquette was never laicized. However, at least three lawsuits holding the Burlington Diocese accountable for his actions have been successful. The awards have been in the millions. Close to twenty lawsuits are still pending in Vermont.

A relative says that he still wears a Roman collar on occasion. He's now close to 80 and has health problems, and though he's not worked in several decades, he gets by. He was left an inheritance by a parishioner of Our Lady of Blessed Sacrament Church in Westfield, his hometown.

For at least the last twenty years he's lived in the ranch-style house built by his parents on Belleview Dr., in a rural part of Westfield, Massachusetts. Like the dozen or so other credibly accused clerics who reside in the Diocese, he does not appear to be under any supervision or treatment program.

Rev. James F. Talbot, S.J.

The Talbot case was repeatedly cited by both plaintiff and defendants in the \$8.5 million settlement case, because it had raised similar issues

about so-called "privileged" documents such as bishop-priest correspondence, psychological evaluations and so on. In fact, it reads almost like a blueprint for the efforts of Mr. Egan's legal team.

Which is a little odd, because "Talbot" was mostly a loser. However, the Talbot decision upheld some areas of secrecy. The court found that keeping documents between Jesuit priests and superiors confidential helped to establish trust, and therefore contributed to the enforcement of religious discipline. The Jesuits defended this trust as part of their belief system.

This last part was found to be a valid excuse for secrecy. This may explain why the diocese decided to roll the dice on trying to enforce all of the defenses brought up by "Talbot" even though most of them were already found without merit by the courts. Ironically, even the one aspect that prevailed in Talbot was shot down in the Springfield case (see P.89, pg. 8).

"Talbot" main case (May 13, 2004) can be found at:

<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=ma&vol=sjcslip/sjcMay04g&invol=1>

"Talbot" appeal (Nov. 24, 2004) can be found at:

<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=ma&vol=sjcslip/sjcNov04r&invol=1>

Rev. James F. Talbot, S.J., taught and coached at Boston College High, 1972 to 1980. He pleaded guilty in 2005 to raping two teenage students between 1977-79. He was sentenced to 5 to 7 years. He is currently incarcerated at the Massachusetts Treatment Center for the Sexually Dangerous in Bridgewater, Mass. While there, he is known as "James F. Talbot", but he does not appear to be laicized.

Richard Lavigne

Richard Lavigne is listed as a Level III sex offender on the Chicopee Police Department web site. Level III is "high risk offender". No further information is available about Lavigne.

