

Press Release

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Bishop George Lucas of the Springfield, IL diocese seems to have dumped some of his garbage at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Raleigh, NC. Msgr. John Renken, who is now at the cathedral and is acting as a judge in some annulment cases, was removed from the Springfield diocese several years ago after an investigation conducted by former Federal Prosecutor Bill Roberts concluded there were some problems in his background. The president and chief investigator for Catholic watchdog group Roman Catholic Faithful (RCF), Stephen Brady, stated today, "I know from first-hand testimony that Renken is a predatory homosexual and a thief. He was removed from this diocese because of misconduct, yet he has found his way to Sacred Heart Cathedral in Raleigh to conduct more business. God help those poor people."

On August 2, 2006 Bishop Lucas held a press conference releasing the results of his 18-month investigation of clergy misconduct within the Diocese. The report revealed that Lucas' predecessor, Bishop Daniel Ryan, "engaged in improper sexual conduct and used his office to conceal his activities. The investigation found a culture of secrecy fostered under Bishop Ryan's leadership which discouraged faithful priests from coming forward with information about misconduct. The actions of Bishop Ryan no doubt were harmful and seriously eroded the trust of parishioners and the community at large..." Lucas began his investigation when he learned that one

Thomas Munoz had contacted RCF with allegations of clergy misconduct. A complete copy of report is available at www.dio.org or by contacting RCF.

Within the text of the summary of the investigation was contained the following:

The Designation of Monsignors - There exists the perception that Bishop Lucas rewarded those who protected Bishop Ryan by granting them the title "Monsignor" in 2003. In conjunction with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the diocese, the committee overseeing the festivities recommended that 15 priests be honored with the title by the Holy See at the request of Bishop Lucas. Msgr. Renken, then Vicar General, chaired the committee making the Monsignor recommendations. Bishop Lucas acted upon the recommendation of his Vicar General and on what he believed to be the recommendation of the committee. Though no evidence suggests Bishop Lucas was aware of any wrongdoing of the honorees at the time he requested these priests be given the title of Monsignor.

Brady replied, "In 2001, two years before Fr. Renken was made Monsignor, I sat in Bishop Lucas' office in a face-to-face meeting and brought up the issue of Fr. Renken's homosexual relationship with Fr. Kenneth Steffan. Bishop Lucas changed the subject. He was not interested in what I had to say. Lucas went on to place Renken and Steffan in charge of the Deaconate program."

Regarding Msgr. Renken, Mr. Scott J. Kastel has come forward with first-hand testimony regarding Msgr. Renken's predatory homosexual nature. Brady continued, "Mr. Kastel has allowed me to use his name publicly because he is scandalized by the fact that Bishop Lucas, while claiming to want information regarding clergy misconduct, refuses to act once he receives it. Kastel provided

both former Bishop Ryan (himself a predator) and Bishop Lucas with statements and only came to RCF after Lucas, like Bishop Daniel Ryan, refused to take action. Mr. Kastel is the fifth individual I am aware of who has come forward with information on Renken's homosexual activity."

Msgr. John Renken was past president of the Canon Law Society and in 2002 was appointed advisor to the Bishops' committee on child abuse in Washington, D.C.)

Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc. is a not-for-profit lay organization, with many religious members, dedicated to promoting orthodox Catholic teaching and fighting heterodoxy and corruption within the Catholic hierarchy.

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