


ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Prot. No. 325/200 - 18478

March 24, 2004

Most Reverend Angelo Amato, SDB
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
Palazzo del S. Uffizio
00120 Vatican City

Your Excellency:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the matter of Reverend Marvin T. Knighton. As I indicated in my previous correspondence, the preliminary investigation in this case was particularly challenging. The original investigator was not able to complete the task satisfactorily to the Diocesan Review Board's standards. A second investigator was then assigned and he completed the task and sent the report to the Diocesan Review Board last week. I have now received their recommendation.

While Father Knighton is referring to one situation in which a criminal trial resulted in an acquittal, there are actually three separate allegations against him by three different alleged victims and a fourth reported second hand by an alleged victim's mother. The attached report outlines the circumstances of those allegations. After preliminary investigation, I am satisfied that these have the semblance of truth to them. You will note that there was no collusion in the presentation of the three reports, that Father admits to one allegation of inappropriate conduct, and that the pattern of behavior described is consistent.

I am enclosing the standard reporting form for these allegations. Given Father Knighton's assignment in or independent employment at high schools over the years, I would not be surprised to learn of additional allegations. Father Knighton has a long history of being extremely independent and not accountable for his actions. His personnel file reveals that he would regularly leave a place of assignment on his own initiative and find employment on his own, only later informing diocesan officials. Against explicit directives, he adopted two children and later, again with no consultation or permission, adopted a third child. He has moved out of and back into the diocese frequently, often with no prior notice.

Given the nature of the alleged and admitted sexual abuse, along with the serious abuse of office, I have pondered long and hard to arrive at an opinion about the most appropriate action to be taken. In order that justice may be made manifest and healing of the victims and the Church may proceed, I am asking that Reverend Marvin Knighton be dismissed *ex officio* from the clerical state. Whatever financial needs he may have can be negotiated in justice.

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If the judgement of Your Excellency is that this case should proceed to a dismissal by decree of your Congregation, I would cede to that judgement. Furthermore, if it is your judgement that this case should proceed through a canonical penal process, I humbly request a dispensation from prescription as well as a sanation of any procedural errors that may have occurred during the time this case was under investigation. The severity and frequency of the offenses are such that it is my opinion that these requests are justified. I look forward to your further instructions in this matter.

With sentiments of deepest esteem, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy M. Dolan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of Milwaukee

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ADOM052751

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

Prot. No. [REDACTED]

Reverend Marvin T. Knighton

Date of Birth: [REDACTED]

Age: 54

Presbyteral Ordination: May 24, 1975

Years of Ministry: 29

Diocese of Incardination: Milwaukee

Ministry in other Diocese: Phoenix

Address: [REDACTED]

Phoenix, Arizona 85028

ASSIGNMENTS:

Year	Assignment	Location	Appointment
August 1975 - June 1976	St. Anne Parish	Milwaukee	In solidum team member
June 1976 - August 1987	Pius XI High School	Milwaukee	Faculty
August 1987 - August 1988	Leave of Absence	- <i>Whitcomb</i>	
August 1988 - November 1991	Pius XI High School	Milwaukee	Faculty
November 1991 - July 1992	Unassigned	- <i>Temp Admin at St. Fred's</i>	
July 1992 - July 1994	Mt. Mary College	Milwaukee	Campus minister
July 1994 - June 1995	Leave of Absence	# 4	
June 1995 - December 1995	St. Martin de Porres Parish	Milwaukee	Pastor
December 1995 - July 1997	All Saints Parish	Milwaukee	Associate pastor
July 1997 - August 1998	Leave of Absence	- <i>Schooling</i>	
August 1998 - July 2000	Dominican High School	Whitefish Bay	Asst Principal
August 2000 - June 2001	St. Mary High School	Phoenix, AZ	Campus minister
August 2001 - April 2002	Archdiocese of Milwaukee		Education consultant

ACCUSATIONS:

Year	Victim	Age	Alleged acts	Denunciation
1974 /75	[REDACTED]	15	Hugging, kissing, forced masturbation at priest's residence; one time; priest admits "inappropriate conduct"	March 28, 2002
1974/75	[REDACTED]	?	Not specified beyond "sexual abuse" as reported to the mother and handed on to the Archdiocese	March 3, 2004
1988/89	[REDACTED]	15	Genital touching; one time; in swimming pool at diocesan pastoral center	July 1, 2002
1989-92	[REDACTED]	13-15	Hugging, kissing, fondling in priest's residence and in swimming pool at diocesan pastoral center	February 25, 2002

CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

Year	Type/case	Conviction	Sentence
2003	Criminal trial – two counts second degree sexual assault	Acquittal	

MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE DIOCESE

Year	Action
2002	Requested his resignation from position in Education Office; resignation accepted Precept issued (April 1, 2002)
2003	Canonical investigation begun upon completion of criminal trial Precept re-issued (September 5, 2003)
2004	Case referred to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

SUSTENANCE PROVIDED BY THE DIOCESE

Father Knighton is provided with the monthly equivalent of a pensioned priest, \$1,250. He is also provided with health and dental coverage.

RESPONSE / RECOURSE BY THE CLERIC

Year	Action
2002	Denies [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] allegations, admits to "inappropriate conduct" with [REDACTED] but states that because it occurred prior to ordination it is not an issue
2003	Sought hierarchical recourse against "administrative decisions" (not specified to the Archdiocese); continues to threaten legal action against the Archdiocese



CONGREGATIO
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano,
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

15 June 2004

Prot. N. 325/2003-19268
(In response to *hot mentis huius mensura*)

CONFIDENTIAL

Your Excellency,

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has received the requested documentation you sent on 24 March 2004 regarding the Reverend Marvin T. KNIGHTON, a priest of your archdiocese who has been accused of sexual abuse of minors.

After a careful study of the facts, this Dicastery at its Particular Congress of 29 May 2004 decided to grant a derogation from the law of prescription and hereby authorises and instructs Your Excellency to conduct a judicial penal process against delicts allegedly committed by Fr. Knighton after his diaconal ordination, that is to say, only those delicts he is alleged to have committed while in the clerical state. Enclosed is a copy of the *motu proprio Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* which contains, apart from particular law for the United States of America, the norms governing such a penal process. Your Excellency is reminded that the acts of the process should kindly be forwarded to this Dicastery upon its completion at first instance.

I take this opportunity to thank Your Excellency for the vigilance that you keep over these serious matters and to offer you my sincere respects. With every best wish, I remain,

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

* Angelo Amato, SDB
Titular Archbishop of Sila
Secretary

Enclosure

His Excellency
The Most Reverend Timothy M. DOLAN
Archbishop of Milwaukee
3501 South Lake Drive, P.O. Box 070912
Milwaukee, WI, 53207-0912
U.S.A.

078

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ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE
DEPARTMENT FOR CLERGY

August 13, 2007

Marvin T. Knighton


Phoenix, AZ 85028

Dear Marv,

I am sorry to be the one that needs to affirm the fact that the penal trial called for by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has been completed. The decision of the Tribunal found that crime was committed in two of the three counts presented. The judges have imposed the penalty of permanent restriction from ministry. I presume that you received this information and have discussed it with your canonical advocate.

Given this situation, I am writing to ask you if you would prefer to seek a voluntary laicization from the clerical state. Such a decision on your part may help to bring closure to this experience and help you to move on to a new leg in your life's journey.

Would you kindly respond to this letter in writing by the end of August, 2007? If you should decide to seek voluntary laicization, someone at the archdiocese would be happy to help you with the process.

Thank you for the consideration, Marv. Please know that you are in my prayers daily.

In the Lord Jesus,



Very Reverend Curt J. Frederick
Vicar for Clergy

C: Dr. J. Michael Ritty, advocate



CONGREGATIO
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano,
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

BAC

31 January 2009

Prot. N. 325/2003-28756
(In response fiat mentio huius numeri)

CONFIDENTIAL

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you regarding the case of Rev. Marvin KNIGHTON, a priest of your Archdiocese who has been accused of the sexual abuse of minors. This Congregation has received from Rev. Knighton an appeal against the sentence, given on 27 July 2007, in the Penal Process carried out at First Instance by the Metropolitan Tribunal of Detroit. Your Excellency has also requested that a more severe penalty be imposed on Rev. Knighton than that given in the Tribunal of First Instance.

The Congregation has authorized the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to carry out a Penal Process at Second Instance and would therefore kindly request that Your Excellency ensure that all of the *Acta* pertaining to this case are forwarded to the said Second Instance Tribunal. Your own concerns regarding the penalty imposed should also be included. Your request should be construed as a petition that the Promoter of Justice in Second Instance file for a *dimissio in poenam*.

Thanking you for your assistance in this matter, with prayerful support and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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✠ Luis F. LADARIA, S.J.
Titular Archbishop of Thibica
Secretary

His Excellency
Most Rev. Timothy M. DOLAN
Archbishop of Milwaukee
P.O. Box 070912
Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ADOM041990

DISPOSITIVE

CONGREGATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

This Court of Appeal of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith upholds the findings of the Court of First Instance of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in the AFFIRMATIVE as to the proven guilt of Marvin T. Knighton as a cleric of the allegations of the sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric presented by Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED]. This Court also uphold the finding of that same Court of First Instance in the NEGATIVE as to the guilt of Marvin T. Knighton of the allegation of the sexual abuse by a cleric of a minor presented by Mr. [REDACTED].

As a penalty for his violations of the obligations of the clerical state, this Court furthermore dismisses Marvin T. Knighton from the clerical state. He is permanently removed from the exercise of any ecclesiastical ministry except as provided in the Code of Canon Law and any faculties or privileges or compensation that would accompany the clerical state from the date of the execution of this decision unless it be part of the severance agreement reached by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in view of justice due to his past service to the people of God.

This decision is to be published to Mr. Michael Ritty as Advocate "for his eyes only". It is to be published to the Archbishop of Milwaukee for the purposes of a review by Marvin T. Knighton without his receiving a copy. All are to be reminded of the Pontifical Secret in these matters.

As a decision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith acting on behalf of the Supreme Pontiff, this Decision is not subject to appeal.

RE: Rev. Martin T. Knighton
CDF Num. Prot. [REDACTED]

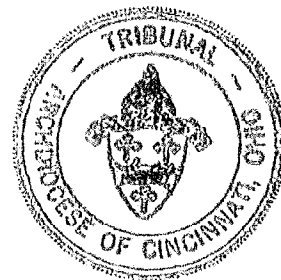
Signed, decreed, witnessed, and published on this 13th day of January 2011 at the Tribunal Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.

[REDACTED]
Reverend [REDACTED], JCD, STD
Presiding Judge

[REDACTED]
Reverend [REDACTED], JCL
Associate Judge


Reverend Joseph R. Binzer, JCL
Notary

[REDACTED]
Reverend [REDACTED]
Associate Judge and Ponens



BE IT KNOWN TO ALL

that this case is explicitly subject to the Pontifical Secret (art 25. *Gravior Delicta. Normae Processualis*); this applies to all information, processes and decisions associated with this case (*Secreta continere*, February 4, 1974 [AAS, 66 1974, pages 89-92]).