



Social Services

Diocese of Rockford

555 Colman Center Drive
P.O. Box 7044
Rockford, IL 61108

(815) 387-3374
Fax (815) 399-6303

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For further information: Frank Vonch, Director,
Catholic Charities, 815-399-4300

Fr. Corapi's superior pulls plug on Catholic Charities fund-raiser

Father John Corapi will not appear as planned at the Northern Illinois University Convocation Center on Saturday, March 26, or meet with sponsors of the event the night before in Rockford.

Corapi was to be the only speaker at a major conference planned as a fund-raising program for Catholic Charities, according to Frank Vonch, director of the agency. "Without him there is no program," Vonch said.

He added that all ticket sales and sponsorships would be refunded, although he is still working on details regarding how the refund process will proceed. "We hope to have those details worked out in the next 72 hours," he said, adding that they will be posted on the Catholic Charities website (www.fathercorapidekalb.com) as soon as they are finalized. If people have questions, they are welcome to call the Catholic Charities office at 815-387-3374 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Vonch said today that he received word from Father Corapi's religious superior, Father Gerard Sheehan, Regional Priest Servant of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, that Father Corapi would not be able to fulfill his engagements in DeKalb and Rockford because he "has been placed on administrative leave from priestly ministry, in accordance to the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church."

On his website, Father Corapi reported: "On Ash Wednesday I learned that a former employee sent a three-page letter to several bishops accusing me of everything from drug addiction to multiple sexual exploits with her and several other women." He concluded his statement by saying: "All of the allegations are false, and I ask you to pray for all concerned."

On Friday, March 18, all bishops in the U.S. were sent a memo by Msgr. David Malloy, General Secretary of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, that read:

"The Diocese of Corpus Christi has informed the Conference of its concerns with regard to Fr. John Corapi, SOLT. The superiors of the Society of Our Lady of the Holy Trinity (SOLT), headquartered in the Diocese of Corpus Christi, have notified the diocese that Fr. Corapi has been placed on administrative leave and has had all of his priestly faculties removed. The superiors of SOLT have further advised the diocese that this action was taken after SOLT received allegations of misconduct on Fr. Corapi's part, but that these allegations do not appear to involve minors or claims of criminal activity."

Vonch expressed regret over any inconvenience the incident is causing people, but said he is gratified to learn that all the people involved have their priorities in order.

“Obviously, we are devastated” Vonch said. “We have been working for almost two years building support for this event and we have been looking forward to a very special day. The proceeds would have provided vital support to our many Catholic Charities ministries. But at this moment, I don’t know how we’re going to recover the expenses of our preparations, much less forgo the contributions we have been anticipating to help fund our programs for children.

“Of course, we’re also sorry for the inconvenience this is to the many people who stepped up to support and attend the program, and now we are focused on working out the details to see that everyone gets a full refund of their donations,” he added.

“But it’s good to know that those who are making the decisions about this matter agree that resolving these accusations has to be given first priority.”