

Long speaks to press on affair with prelate

WASHINGTON (CNS) — More than two weeks after revelations that Archbishop Eugene A. Marino resigned as Atlanta's archbishop after an affair with Vicki R. Long, their names were still in the news with few signs of a letup.

At a press conference in Atlanta Aug. 16, Long, a 27-year-old single mother, made her first public statement since news of the affair broke. She said she has considered herself married to the 56-year-old archbishop since December, 1988.

Archdiocesan officials, previously aware of her claim, had said the week before that there was no such marriage.

Long was introduced to the press by her new lawyer, Los Angeles attorney Gloria Allred, nationally known for her advocacy of feminist causes.

In her statement, Long also denied having had any sexual relations with Father Woods — or with Bishop Lyke, a denial that left reporters puzzled since no relationship with Bishop Lyke had ever been suggested.

Church officials in Atlanta and Washington meanwhile were denying categorically that Archbishop Marino had tried to commit suicide, as claimed Aug. 15 by an Atlanta TV station.

And the *Atlanta Constitution* Aug. 16 got the first news reporter in to see Archbishop Marino since he went into seclusion in May. The reporter said the archbishop, dressed in casual clothes and seated in a sparsely furnished hospital room, was "gracious" but declined to be interviewed.

When Archbishop Marino became archbishop of Atlanta in May, 1988, he became a center of national attention as the country's first black archbishop.

In May of this year he temporarily stepped down from his post, citing stress and a need for a rest. He went into seclusion at an undisclosed retreat house in New York state.

Still in seclusion, he resigned as archbishop of Atlanta July 10, citing "severe stress" and a need for physical and spiritual recuperation. Auxiliary Bishop James P. Lyke of Cleveland was named apostolic administrator of the archdiocese.

An Atlanta television station reported Aug. 1 that the archbishop resigned

because of an affair with Long.

Bishop Lyke called a press conference Aug. 2 to confirm that the archbishop had been involved for two years in an "intimate relationship" with Long. He said the relationship had ended.

The bishop said church authorities had learned of the relationship in April and started an investigation. While the investigation was under way, Archbishop Marino voluntarily resigned, he said.

Father Michael Woods, pastor of St. Jude's Parish in Sandy Spring, an Atlanta suburb, told parishioners Aug. 4 that he, too, had been involved in an "illicit" relationship with Woods. He submitted his resignation as pastor and went into seclusion.

Archbishop Marino was admitted to a psychiatric hospital on Aug. 9. Six days later the TV station reported that he was hospitalized because he had tried to commit suicide by a drug overdose. The report made headlines in newspapers across the country the next morning.

The allegation of a suicide attempt brought the first comment from national church officials since the scandal broke. Monsignor Robert N. Lynch, general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the report was "categorically false."

Bishop Lyke also denied the report "categorically" and said it "has no foundation in fact."

The story, however, ended the mystery of Archbishop Marino's whereabouts, carefully guarded by church officials since May in an effort to protect the archbishop's privacy.

Monsignor Lynch confirmed that the archbishop had been living at Trinity Retreat, a Catholic retreat house in Larchmont, N.Y., and that he was hospitalized in Harrison, N.Y., at the Westchester branch of St. Vincent Hospital and Medical Center of New York. The Westchester facility specializes in psychiatric care.

In other developments:

- Bishop Lyke announced that there would be an independent investigation, overseen by a special commission headed by Coca-Cola chief executive officer Donald R. Keough, of the finances of the archdiocese and two parishes headed by



AP/Wide World Photos
Attorney Gloria Allred (right) listens as her client, Vicki Long, declares her love for Archbishop Eugene Marino during an Aug. 16 news conference. The prelate's two-year affair with Long led in May to his resignation as leader of the Atlanta archdiocese.

Father Woods. Bishop Lyke said he had been assured that no archdiocesan funds were given to Long, but he decided on an independent audit to settle the many questions people had raised about it.

- The bishop reported that the archdiocese had set aside \$15,000 to pay medical bills for Long as an act of charity, with a disclaimer that its action was not an admission of responsibility. The money went directly to medical providers, not to Long. In mid-August the fund was used up.

- An archdiocesan spokesman confirmed that Archbishop Marino helped support Long with his personal funds but did not say how much money the archbishop gave her. Some reports have alleged that he gave her up to \$1,500 a month and helped her purchase her house.

- Long denied that she had a sexual relationship with Father Woods, but archdiocesan officials said the priest had explicitly admitted that the relationship was sexual.

- Bishop Raymond W. Lessard of the neighboring Diocese of Savannah denied reports that his diocese had been giving money to Long. She claims a Savannah diocesan priest, Father Donal Keohane, fathered her 4-year-old daughter, LaDonna. Although court-ordered paternity tests showed he is not the father, she has a paternity suit against him and a negligence suit against the diocese pending

since 1987.

- Atlanta archdiocesan attorney David Brown said that, although Long claims to have been married to Archbishop Marino since December, 1988, in a sworn deposition in the Keohane case on Oct. 23, 1989, she stated under oath that she had never had a sexual relationship with any other man except Father Keohane.

Brown said the archdiocese would fight any lawsuit by Long. "Our conclusion is she does not have a legal basis for a claim against the archdiocese and that her claim of a marriage to the archbishop is ludicrous," he said.

By mid-August Long had not yet filed any formal claim against the archdiocese. When news of her relationship with the archbishop became public, Anthony Fontana, a Louisiana lawyer known for handling sexual abuse lawsuits against Catholic officials and institutions, stepped in as her attorney.

After a week as her attorney, he left the case. He was subsequently replaced by Allred, who represents Norma McCorvey — the Jane Roe of the landmark 1973 U.S. Supreme Court abortion case *Roe vs. Wade*.

In 1984, Allred represented a Los Angeles woman in a multimillion-dollar lawsuit against the Los Angeles archdiocese and seven priests who the woman claimed had seduced her.

Author insists study of priests is 'not anti-celibacy'

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — His forthcoming book on priests, celibacy and sex "is not anti-priesthood; it's not anti-celibacy," author A.W. Richard Sipe told Catholic News Service Aug. 13.

Sipe said he estimated that among 1,000 priests he interviewed over a period of 25 years, about 50 percent were practicing celibacy and 50 percent were not at any given time.

He emphasized that his work was not a survey of priests in general, as some news reports depicted it.

At the same time, Sipe defended the projection of his specific findings to the overall population of U.S. priests, saying the in-depth findings of psychotherapy reveal patterns of human behavior from which such projections can be drawn.

Sipe is a former Benedictine monk who is now married and a family therapist and teacher of family therapy at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore.

He received international news coverage for a paper he delivered Aug. 11 at the American Psychological Association convention in Boston, in which he summarized the research in his book due out in September.

The paper criticized the church for an "underdeveloped and immature" ap-

proach to human sexuality and was widely reported as challenging the church's rule of mandatory celibacy for priests. Many reports linked it to recent sex scandals involving Catholic clergy.

In a telephone interview, Sipe emphatically denied that he considers celibacy itself detrimental to the church.

"It's a long-standing tradition of a very powerful charism," he said.

He said his chief problem with the church's current approach to priestly celibacy is that it "demands celibacy but does not educate for it."

"There is no course in a single seminary in this country on celibacy. There is no course in a seminary even on the history of celibacy," he said.

The source of controversy following Sipe's presentation in Boston was his figures on sexually active priests.

He noted that the figures were not based on surveys or demographic studies, but on counseling work with about 500 priests from 1960 to 1985, on discussions with another 500 in workshops and seminars over the same period, and on counseling with about 500 non-priests who were lovers of priests or victims of abuse by priests.

Of the priests interviewed, he said:

- At any given time about 20 percent were involved in ongoing relationships with women or in a series of relationships

with women.

- Another 20 percent were homosexually oriented, and about half of them were sexually active.

- Some 20 percent were involved in patterns of autoerotic behavior indicative of sexual immaturity.

- About 6 percent were sexually attracted to children or adolescents, although not all acted out their inclinations.

Father Kenneth Doyle, press spokesman for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, objected to reports that Sipe's estimates apply to the general population of U.S. priests.

From the news reports, "it looks as though Sipe may have drawn some conclusions about all priests by relying heavily on a group of priests who came to him for counseling precisely because they were having sexual difficulties," the NCCB spokesman said.

Father Doyle said, however, that he agreed "with what seems to be Sipe's principal thesis — namely, that celibacy needs to be taught and explained in a more clear and thorough way ... so that people can live it faithfully and fruitfully.

"I also agree with another point he makes, that celibacy has a value of witness in today's society," he said.

Sipe told CNS that he objected to news coverage which had described his study as a survey.

"This is not a survey. It's not a poll," he said.

He described the book as "an ethnographic study" and compared his approach to that used by anthropologist Margaret Mead in her study of the culture of the Samoans.

"It's not moralistic ... It's not a 'good-guy-bad-guy' situation, but simply (a description of) what is there," he said.

He said that although he personally favors optional celibacy for priests, in the book "my position is absolutely neutral. It could be used by either side."

Father Joseph Gallagher, a Baltimore archdiocesan priest best known nationally as translation editor of "The Documents of Vatican II," said he proofread the book for Sipe and considered it "likely to become a classic."

At the same time, Father Gallagher said, he was sure some elements of the book would be "controversial and sensationalized."

Sipe said the book, to be published under the title, *A Secret World: Sexuality and the Search for Celibacy*, is divided into four main sections: a description of celibacy and its history in the church; how it is practiced among priests today; a description of the "process" of consolidating or integrating celibacy in one's life; and finally "a chapter on the achievement of celibacy."