Cardinals Gathering - Vatican's L'Osservatore Romano Identifies Surprise Favorite For Next Pope

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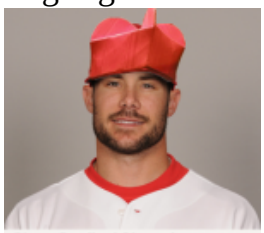
Steve Cardinal Shumaker now heads Los Angeles Archdiocese

Aging Steve Cardinal Shumaker's influence waning after his recent demotion (see text)[/caption]

Today, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Holy See's semi-official newspaper, reported that the United States Cardinal contingent had arrived in Vatican City thereby nearly completing the College of Cardinals which will soon begin choosing the next Pope. In addition, Giovanni Maria Vian, *L'Ossavertor*e's editor-in-chief, claimed that the large number of American Cardinals would likely be a decisive force in the Conclave. "Once Marc Cardinal Rzepczynski arrives when his doctors feel his torn bicep has healed, the entire world Cardinalate will be in completeness," said Maria Vian.

> "Also recall that the American Cardinalate exchanged Skip Cardinal Schumaker with the Los Angeles Archdiocese for Jake Cardinal Lemmerman when Cardinal

> Shumaker showed some signs of fatigue and could no longer go to altar left with his usual verve. So, with a more youthful Cardinal Lemmerman now in the mix, we believe that during the Conclave, Cardinal Shumaker's influence will be proved to have waned."

"Insiders," the *L'Osservatore* editor explained,

> "believe this seemingly small change in the Cardinalate balance of power will benefit America's Peter Cardinal Rose during the selection process. Cardinal Shumaker considers Cardinal Rose a 'putz," but Cardinal Shumaker's influence is in rapid decline since the last Conclave. Moreover, unnamed sources have just today revealed that Cardinal Rose finished second in the last Conclave to our departing Pope Benedict XVI, formerly Cardinal Ratzinger. Only pending felony charges in the United States prevented Cardinal Rose from prevailing in 2005. That and his two daughters (see picture below). Nonetheless, many view Cardinal Rose, who has no present criminal indictments, as among the top picks. If you are a betting man, as I am, then a Rose bet could be a good over-under."

Who said Papal Conclaves are humdrum? [Be sure to see the complete L'Osservatore Romano article here, plus other details of the upcoming Conclave]

We will follow this story closely and report any breaking news here.

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Cardinals gather in Saint Peters for upcoming conclave. Picture courtesy of *L'Osservatore Romano*[/caption]

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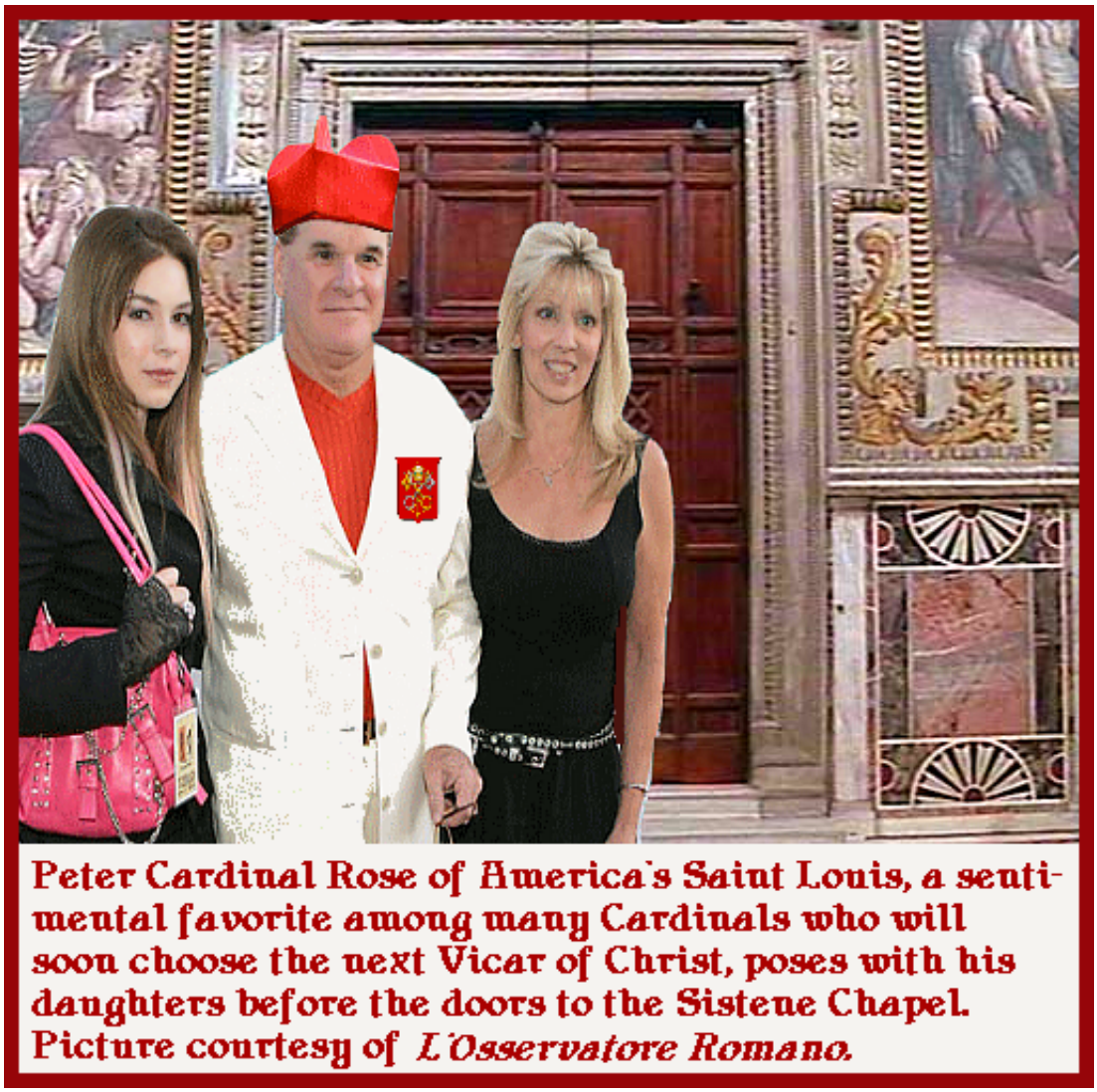

Peter Cardinal Rose of America's Saint Louis, a sentimental favorite among many Cardinals who will soon choose the next Vicar of Christ, poses with his daughters before the doors to the Sistene Chapel. Picture courtesy of *L'Osservatore Romano.*

Well-liked by some, distrusted by some, a controversial choice should Cardinals choose him, but Rose insiders say smart money is on Cardinal Rose for the next Patriarch of the Roman Catholic Church.[/caption]

(For more TWSA! coverage of Peter Cardinal Rose see this.)