

TAKEN FROM FR. PARKER'S PERSONAL FACEBOOK PAGE

June 18, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After prayerful consideration, I have decided that it is in the best interest of the parishioners of Holy Cross Parish and its employees that I distance myself from the Parish campus. While I maintain that, as a matter of Church law, I still hold the office of pastor of Holy Cross for the reasons set forth in my statement released June 15, 2021, I acknowledge that it has become impossible for me to perform my pastoral duties under the present circumstances.

It has become necessary for me to clarify the events of June 16, 2021. Unfortunately, it has been reported by the Rockford Diocese that I prevented Father Twenty from offering the 6:30 a.m. Mass that day at Holy Cross, the first day of his assignment by Bishop Malloy. This is not accurate. I gave instructions to ensure that Father Twenty was able to enter the church. After Father Twenty entered the church and vesting sacristy, I invited Father Twenty to concelebrate Mass with me and advised him of the appropriate vestments. Father Twenty refused my offer and voluntarily left the church shortly thereafter. These events were observed by multiple witnesses and documented on video.

That same morning, the attorney for the Rockford Diocese sent an email to parish employees reminding them that they are employed by the diocese, not by Holy Cross. Additionally, it directed them to recognize Father Twenty as their supervisor and the Parochial Administrator of Holy Cross and to no longer acknowledge me as pastor. Later that morning, I received a letter from Bishop Malloy threatening me with penalties under Church law should I continue to maintain that I am the pastor of Holy Cross and fail to vacate the rectory.

Around that same time, I received an emailed letter from Bishop Malloy sent to all of the priests of the Rockford Diocese stating that I had “kept [Father Twenty] from ... offering the parish Mass at 6:30 a.m.” As a result of these events, I was compelled to depart the Parish campus to protect my flock from the rapidly escalating discord, strife and confusion.

I am currently pursuing my only available recourse with the Church authorities regarding my position as pastor of Holy Cross. Above all, I continue to fervently pray for a peaceful resolution to this matter for the good of the Church and so that I may continue with my priestly duties. To date, Bishop Malloy has still failed to provide any explanation to me, and more importantly, to the faithful, for his abrupt assertion that my term as pastor has expired and his decision to deny me any new assignment within the diocese.

I ask that you continue to keep Bishop Malloy, Father Twenty, me and all clergy in your daily prayers, especially as you approach our Eucharistic Lord and Our Lady, Mother of the Church.

May God bless you abundantly through Mary,
Father Parker