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Priest Julio Lancellotti hands food to a homeless person in Sao Paulo, Brazil, April 3, 2020. (AP/Andre Penner, File)

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A renowned [Brazilian Catholic priest](#) confirmed Tuesday that he was ordered by Sao Paulo's archbishop to stop broadcasting his services and avoid social media postings all-together, following attacks from right-wing figures who denounce his actions as leftist.

With 2.3 million followers on Instagram, Fr. Júlio Lancellotti, 76, is famous all over Brazil for his extensive advocacy and outreach work with homeless people in Sao Paulo. On Tuesday, he told journalists he received the news from Cardinal Odilo Scherer, Sao Paulo's archbishop, "in a spirit of obedience and resilience."

Sao Paulo's archdiocese said in a statement that "issues discussed by the archbishop and a priest are of internal concern of the church and are carried forward directly between them."

Lancellotti's services were regularly broadcast Sunday mornings, and in one of his latest he warned churchgoers that his online following would not be able to watch if they did not attend in person.

Later on Tuesday, more than 40 Brazilian organizations that work for homeless people sent a letter to Scherer asking him to reconsider his decision to suspend Lancelotti's broadcasts and social media activity.

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The letter seen by The Associated Press does not question the Church's autonomy and focuses on the social impact of the cardinal's decision. The signatory organizations will send representatives to next Sunday's service to offer Lancellotti their public support.

Lancellotti has accumulated political adversaries in Brazil since the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), though he has performed similar work in Sao Paulo's Mooca district for almost 40 years.

Sao Paulo's Deputy Mayor Col. Ricardo Mello Araujo has accused Lancellotti of empowering drug users scattered downtown, a claim the priest denies. [City councilors](#) allied with former [President Jair Bolsonaro](#) have tried to open investigations against the clergyman's work.

Lancellotti denies any wrongdoing. The Catholic priest, an outspoken supporter of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, has for many years defended his work as a "pastoral action" of the archdiocese, arguing that he does not belong to any nonprofit organization.