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One victory for Texas parishioners

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

Here's an update on one of many disputes about dioceses closing parishes.

Parishioners of Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church in Port Bolivar, Texas, have sued to keep the Galveston-Houston archdiocese from closing their parish, the last remaining Catholic church building standing on the Bolivar Peninsula after Hurricane Ike.

Last month, the archdiocese tried to move the case to federal court, saying the suit was interfering with church doctrine in violation of the constitutional separation of church and state.

But Monday, July 20, U.S. District Judge Melinda Harmon ruled that the case concerned property rights and not a constitutional question, so it will stay in state court.

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