

Cleveland bishop: "I will not appeal the decrees to the Apostolic Signatura"

Brian Roewe | Apr. 17, 2012 NCR Today

Bishop Richard G. Lennon of the Cleveland diocese has announced he will not appeal the Congregation for the Clergy's ruling in favor of 12 parishioner groups who appealed to the Vatican to keep their churches open and parishes intact.

"During these Easter days, I often think of Jesus' first words as he appeared to the apostles after rising from the dead: Peace be with you. I now say, it's time for peace and unity in the diocese of Cleveland," said Lennon at a press conference this morning.

"I will not appeal the decrees to the Apostolic Signatura. Doing so would prolong the process for a number of years and would create more uncertainty and continue to divide our Catholic community. Therefore, I will move forward and carry out the Congregation for the Clergy's directives regarding the parishes in an orderly manner," he said.

Previous reports had the congregation ruling in favor of 13 appealing parishes, but Lennon stated he received only 12 decrees concerning parish restoration and church reopening. Sources have indicated one or two additional parishioner groups may have filed appeals to have their parish names changed or restored, rather than restore their parish or church.

"We are quite relieved, and hopefully that whole process will be a rather smooth one, and we'll see where it goes from here," Patricia Singleton-Schulte, head of parish advocate group Endangered Catholics, told *NCR* today.

The parishes began receiving word of the congregation's rulings in early March, and had been waiting for Lennon's response since. He had 60 days from receiving the decrees March 14 to decide if he would appeal to the Apostolic Signatura, the Vatican's Supreme Court. He instead used 35.

No timeline has been given for the parishes' reopening.

Check back at *NCR* tomorrow for a complete report of Lennon's decision and the Cleveland parishes.

For NCR's past coverage on the Cleveland parishes:

[Cleveland parishes file motions in Rome demanding their churches reopen](#) [1] (March 30, 2012)

[Cleveland bishop to mull parish reopenings while celebrations go ahead](#) [2] (March 15, 2012)

[Cleveland parishes await Lennon's response](#) [3] (March 12, 2012)

[Cleveland parish remains a community of a different sort](#) [4] (March 5, 2012)

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