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Bishop tells ad-libbing priest to resign or face removal

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NCR Today

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch is reporting today that the Rev. William Rowe, the Belleville, Ill. diocese priest who ad-libbed parts of the Mass, must resign or face removal by canon law, according to his bishop.

The Post-Dispatch story reads:

The Rev. William Rowe said Belleville Bishop Edward Braxton told him in a meeting Tuesday that if he refused to resign as pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Mount Carmel, Ill., the bishop would use canon or church law to remove him. Rowe said he asked Braxton if he could appeal a removal, if it came to that.

Rowe said Braxton told him that he could appeal an eventual removal to the Vatican's version of the supreme court, called the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. But, Braxton said, he had already spoken to the head of that court — former St. Louis archbishop, Cardinal Raymond Burke — in February, and that Burke told Braxton that Rowe should have been removed — a long time ago, according to the priest.

“The understanding there is that I'm done,” Rowe said.

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