

Traditional Catholics Plan To Build Church in Gilford

By CHRIS DORNIN
Staff Writer

GILFORD — A local group, calling itself "Traditional Catholics of New Hampshire," has made application to the Planning Board to build a 225-seat church on Morrill Street. A spokesman for the Catholic diocese of New Hampshire said the applicants are proceeding without required permission from Bishop Odore Gendron.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment has granted a variance for this proposed use in the single-family residential zone. A public hearing is scheduled May 4 before the Planning Board.

The Rev. Hector Bolduc, founder of the new church, said he has been leading worship services since 1974 in his family's 1779 farmhouse across the road from the building site.

The local minister said he expects dropouts from mainstream Catholicism to join the small existing congregation when the new building is ready.

According to Bolduc, 11,000 priests and 30,000 nuns have left the church because they are disturbed at changes brought about by Vatican II.

Chancellor Monsignor Francis Christian of the New Hampshire Roman Catholic diocese said every Catholic priest needs approval from his bishop to do anything official in the name of the larger church;

specifically, to preach, to celebrate Mass.

"A new church needs that too," he said. "It hasn't been granted. This is the first we've heard of these (formal) plans. They are of great concern to us."

The Rev. Bolduc said, "You don't need the approval of a bishop to start a church. How many churches in Laconia have obtained the blessing of the (Catholic) church in Manchester to build here? They know I'm an ordained priest. I've delivered my credentials."

The Rev. Robert Boisvert of Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church in Lakeport said he has been expecting this move for some time. "I've just been waiting for the other shoe to drop," he said.

He said Bolduc was ordained in 1974 in Ecône, Switzerland by Bishop Marcel LeFebvre, a dissident who left the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II and founded the Society of St. Pius the 10th. "Bolduc was unable to be ordained a Catholic priest in this country," he said.

Rev. Bolduc said he was associated with the Pius 10th movement at one point, but is no longer.

According to Rev. Boisvert, the original schism movement has splintered into struggling factions. "It's a total dead end, kept alive by a few strong personalities," he said.

Bolduc said he has started 65 churches in Mexico and the United States, eight schools, and St. Mary's College in St. Mary's, Kan. The Gilford church would be the 66th parish he has started. There is also a traditional church in Munsonville.

Both Rev. Boisvert and Msgr. Christian challenged Bolduc's authority to call himself a Catholic priest. "Nobody can use the name 'Catholic' without being in union with the local bishop, who is in union with Rome," said Msgr. Christian.

Rev. Bolduc said some Catholic priests have served communion with Coca Cola and cookies. "I've really seen that, a priest consecrating Coke and cookies."

"That's absurd," said Rev. Boisvert. "If it happened, it was in the 60s. Hippies were in the church too. If it happened, do you think it was the teaching of the Catholic church? He's rebelling against something that no longer exists. If he wants to attack the church, he should attack its doctrines."

Rev. Bolduc said he wants to celebrate the Mass and give absolution in Latin. He said he opposes the alleged liberalism in the main church.

The Gilford man said bishops have allowed professed homosexuals to continue serving as priests; that God has become a neuter in recent Catholic Bibles; that some American bishops favor artificial birth control devices.

"At Vatican II, the bishops were given latitude to experiment with everything," he said. "It's become a church democracy. Is Christ the Son of God? Raise your hands."

Rev. Bolduc said he has visited Rome, where Vatican authorities expressed sympathy with his views. He said bishops around the world, especially in this country, are revolting against the Pope; that they "have bucked Rome."

He said, "Rome has tried to



Man with a Vision

The Rev. Hector Bolduc of Gilford and his religious group, Traditional Catholics of New Hampshire, plan to erect a white New England church in this meadow off Morrill Street. "My father always wanted a church there," he said.

enforce its policy decisions with little success. I'm sure the Pope and the church will eventually win. The Pope believes in being quiet and patient, waiting to gradually change individuals."

Bolduc said he is merely doing to the bishops what they are doing to their higher own authorities.

"I was ordained in the Latin rite," he said. "If people want it in Latin, I would hope there would be enough charity in the local bishop and diocese to allow it."

Rev. Boisvert said New Hampshire priests are free now to use Latin. "That's not the

issue," he said.

According to Boisvert, a priest can say the new rite in Latin at any time. "With special permission from the bishop he may even use the unreformed rite in Latin too," he said.

Rev. Bolduc vowed to continue in his calling. He said troubled priests have come to him with tears of joy.

"The church teaches you have to obey God before man," he noted. "My duty as a priest is to save souls. That is the foremost duty of popes, cardinals, and bishops too," he said. "I will do that as long as I can."