

Boston Herald July 12, 1987 (3) ✓
MAVERICK PRIEST CARVES OUT
safe niche for Latin mass

GILFORD, N.H. — In a grassy field across the road from a 208-year-old New Hampshire farm house, Father Hector Bolduc plans to fulfill his dream.

Despite the Catholic church's official disavowal of his actions, the 52-year-old priest will build an old-fashioned, New England-style, white-steeped church where 225 churchgoers will hear the mass in Latin.

"I haven't asked for permission, nor do I intend to," said the maverick priest, who has been battling the American Catholic Church for more than two decades.

Plans for the church have received all the necessary town permits, said Bolduc, and construction is expected to begin Aug. 1.

Bolduc is the leader of Traditional Catholics of New Hampshire Inc., a group made up of people who believe the changes wrought by Vatican II have resulted in "chaos."

"More and more, what is emerging is a nationalistic American church with less and less ties to the Roman Catholic Church," said Bolduc, seated in the living room of his farm house.

"Oneness no longer exists within the Catholic Church. It used to be that no matter where you went, prayer, dogma and sacraments were the same," said Bolduc, a tall, hearty man who spoke with an increasing fervor.

"You have now a shopping for religion in the church. If I don't like what the local pastor says, I'll find another. Some churches welcome divorce; some say you don't have to go to confession anymore. Some say birth control is illegal while others say do what you want."

"In this diocese," he said, referring to the Diocese of Manchester, "girls serve as altar boys even though the Pope has condemned it."

"There is no question that there is a new church, even in some cases a new religion being set up in this country distinct from the Catholic Church and from Rome. One day there will be a great schism in the church."

Monsignor Francis J. Christian, chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester, said recently that Bolduc "is giving a mistaken impression he is somehow in concord with the mind of the Holy Father when it is Rome that has condemned the very views that Father Bolduc espouses."



Herald photo by Steven LaBadessa

ON THIS ROCK: Father Hector Bolduc stands in a field in Gilford, N.H., where he plans to build his new church for Latin mass.

In response to Bolduc's actions, the diocese released a statement saying the priest does not have permission to start a new church and is operating "contrary to church law."

His attempts "to hear confession or perform marriages for Catholics" will be invalid, the statement said.

In the statement, Monsignor Christian said the diocese is "saddened by Father Bolduc's improper initiative."

Bolduc's response is that "we don't want to oppose the bishop. We don't want to create a fervor like that of Jim and Tammy Bakker. We would enjoy working under the local bishop ... but we must operate without his approval because of our faith and our conscience."

Bolduc's plans come at a time when a local Catholic group claims that 52 percent of Catholics in New England support a return to the celebration of the traditional Latin mass.

P.J. Romano, president of New England Catholic News, which polled 1,200 people in six states, last month said many churchgoers reported "they have had trouble adjusting to the new mass."

Romano criticized unorthodox methods adopted by some pastors, such as a Worcester priest who used a hand puppet for a children's mass.

Bolduc said traditional Catholics are especially disturbed at the abandonment of

the Tridentine mass, celebrated in Latin by a priest at an altar, his back to the congregation.

Since Vatican II, a table has replaced the altar and the priest faces the congregation, saying the mass in the language of the church members.

Bolduc has been saying the traditional Tridentine mass since 1974 in a chapel that used to be the family room of his farmhouse, just off the kitchen. Each Sunday, three masses are offered, with some 70 to 80 people in attendance, a number Bolduc said, boosted by recent publicity about the new church.

Bolduc attended Catholic University in the late 1960s, but "I was removed from the degree program because they were not happy with my pronounced conservative position. I was frequently at odds with teachers."

In 1974 he was ordained in Switzerland by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, a dissident who left the church after Vatican II.

Since then, Bolduc said he has established 65 traditional parishes in the United States and Mexico. Funding comes from local parishioners, he said, as it will for the New Hampshire church.

"Saying the mass in Latin ties the American bishops to Rome while they seek independence; they see it as an umbilical cord and they want to cut it."

"Why do the bishops fear me?" he asked rhetorically. "Why do they fear the mass in Latin? They fear it because they know people love it and people will turn to it and it will tie them that much closer to Rome."

VISIT OUR NEW POOL SHOWROOM:
Come in and let us explain why our custom built in-ground and above ground swimming pools and spas are your best pool values.



— Quality Since 1919 —
Crutcher SALES CO., INC.
1 HIGH ST. WOBURN, MA 01801
664-1234

NOTICE
IRONWORKERS LOCAL #7
CONTRACT RATIFICATION MEETING
SUNDAY MORNING 10:00 A.M.
JULY 12, 1987
FREEPORT HALL

256 Freeport St., Dorchester
June Green dues receipt required
Robert J. Haynes Thomas Brown
Financial Sec. Treas. President

HOME FUEL OIL
FULL SERVICE
64¢ per gal.
Metropolitan Fuel Corp.
Boston and Suburbs
924-8006