



THE REV. Hector Bolduc stands outside the church under construction on Morrill Street in Gilford.
(Staff Photo by Carol Carter)

Dissident Priest Vows To Open 200-Member Church in Gilford

GILFORD — A priest working in direct opposition to the Catholic Diocese of Manchester has vowed to open his new church here next summer where he will offer the traditional Latin rite of the Catholic faith.

The Rev. Hector Bolduc, who was ordained in Switzerland in 1974 by former Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, intends to serve a 200-member parish in his new church on Morrill Street.

Bolduc distanced himself from Lefebvre after the archbishop publicly criticized the Pope. Now Bolduc speaks for a group he says has been forced to obey liberal changes bishops placed in effect after the Second Vatican Council.

Lefebvre was excommunicated from the Catholic Church for continued disobedience to the Pope regarding the spirit and teaching of the Second Vatican Council, a church spokesman said.

A spokesman at the diocese office in Manchester stressed that Catholic priests must have permission from the bishop of the diocese before functioning in New Hampshire.

"Father Bolduc has never obtained permission from Bishop Odore J. Gendron," according to Monsignor Frances J. Christian, chancellor.

Christian said Bolduc was never granted permission to erect a church and will be performing contrary to church law. Sacraments

such as marriages, mass and confessions performed by Bolduc will be invalid, Christian said.

Bolduc counters that a 10-member church commission in Rome told dissident priests in September to continue their work. "Rome said we should try to work with the bishops but I should continue to build this church," Bolduc said.

That commission was formed by Pope Paul VI to work toward voluntary compliance among bishops worldwide, Bolduc said. According to Bolduc, the Pope wants the traditional Latin rite available to Catholics everywhere and is urging bishops to provide that opportunity.

In an apostolic letter published by the Vatican last July, the Pope is quoted, "respect must everywhere be shown for the feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition."

Christian said although the Pope granted permission to bishops for the old-style Tridentine Mass if they (the bishops) felt it appropriate, the decision in New Hampshire was to continue with the changes made after the Second Vatican Council.

"The Latin rite holds the church together and now the unity is disappearing," Bolduc said in explanation of his decision to defy church rules.

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