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# Conservative Priest Establishing Church For Dropout Catholics

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By ADOLPHE V. BERNOTAS

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — A priest unrecognized by the Roman Catholic diocese of New Hampshire plans to build a church for faithful who yearn for the Latin rituals abandoned in the last 20 years.

The Gilford planning board this week approved plans for a 225-seat church to be built by the traditional Catholics' leader, the Rev. Hector Bolduc, on his family farm.

Bolduc, 50, a native of Laconia, says he has been leading worship services since 1974 in the 1779 farmhouse across the road from the building site.

A spokesman for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester said Bolduc has no standing in the diocese and is proceeding without Bishop Odore Gendron's permission.

Dropouts from mainstream Catholicism "who left the church and are wandering aimlessly" will join the 80-member congregation when the new building is ready, Bolduc says.

Bolduc estimates the dropouts have organized into about 250 congregations nationwide, with three in New Hampshire, including groups in Manchester and Nelson.

Bolduc says 11,000 priests and 30,000 nuns have left the church because they are disturbed at changes brought by Vatican II, especially 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, the priest faces the faithful and says the Mass in the language of the congregation members. Latin is used seldom.

Monsignor Francis Christian of the Manchester Diocese said every Catholic priest needs approval from his bishop to do anything official in the name of the church, especially to celebrate Mass and confer sacraments.

But Bolduc disagrees.

"The Catholic Church is not made up only of the Diocese of Manchester," he says. "First there is the appeal to Rome, which has always upheld the traditions of the church and which in fact supports the traditional Catholic movement."

He also says, "I have permission as an American to practice my faith as I wish."

Bolduc was ordained in 1974 in Switzerland by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, a dissident who left the church after Vatican II and founded the Priestly Fraternity of Pius X.

The church considers Lefebvre's ordinations illegal.

Bolduc says he no longer is associated with the Pius X movement.

Bolduc says he has started 65 churches in Mexico and this country, eight schools, and St. Mary's College in St. Mary's, Kansas. The Gilford church would be his 66th parish.

Bolduc said he wants to celebrate Mass and give absolution in Latin and opposes what he sees as liberalism in the mainline church.