

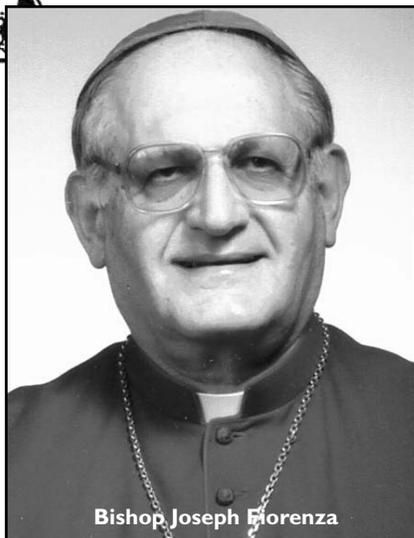
ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH

Diocese of Galveston – Houston

We are a Catholic Community,

As the Body of Christ

We proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Bishop Joseph Fiorenza

St. Michael's Roman Catholic Chapel in North Houston moved to its newly constructed church in Spring, TX, just down the road from the *Novus Ordo* parish, St. James, in September 1998. At that time there were 70 regular parishioners. As of April 1999 the Sunday attendance had jumped to between 150 and 180, completely filling the new church.

The following exchange is the consequence of this growth.

The following letter from Bishop Joseph Fiorenza, bishop of Galveston-Houston (and current president of the NCCB), appeared in the bulletin of St. James Catholic Church, Spring, TX, of which Fr. John Francis Ulm is the pastor.

Rev. Fr. Peter Scott, US District Superior of the Society of Saint Pius X made a response to this letter which begins on the following page.

Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Diocese of Galveston-Houston
1700 San Jacinto
Houston, Texas 77001

March 4, 1999

Dear Father Ulm:

The church that identifies itself as "St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church" is not a Catholic Church of the Catholic Diocese of Galveston-Houston, nor is it in communion with Pope John Paul II and the Apostolic See of Rome. One could say this church is engaging in false advertisement if it is the intention to communicate that they are in union with the Pope of Rome and the Universal Catholic Church.

I don't know the clergy of St. Michael the Archangel Church, but I can assure you that they have no faculties, delegation or permission to minister in my name or as approved clergy for the Diocese of Galveston-Houston.

I hope this clarifies any confusion this church has caused your parishioners.

With prayerful best wishes, I am fraternally in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Bishop of Galveston-Houston

REV. FR. PETER SCOTT'S FIRST RESPONSE

Society of Saint Pius X District of the United States of America REGINA COELI HOUSE

Father Peter R. Scott
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Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Bishop of Galveston-Houston
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Re: St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church, Spring, TX

J.M.J.
April 9, 1999

Your Excellency,

Your letter of March 4, 1999, to Father Ulm was published in the Spring St. James parish bulletin. In your letter, you indicate that you are not familiar with this church, or with its clergy. I am a little surprised, since it moved from a smaller church in North Houston last September, and since the priests of the Society of Saint Pius X have been active in your diocese for 22 years.

It is certainly true, as you point out, that this church is not a part of the diocese of Galveston-Houston. This does not mean that it "*is not a Catholic Church*", as you wrongly affirm, or that it is not "*in communion with Pope John Paul II and the Apostolic See of Rome*", according to your erroneous and gratuitous statement. I am sure that if you made such statements, it is because you admit that you "*don't know the clergy of St. Michael the Archangel Church*". I would have wished, however, that you had contacted us to find out.

St. Michael the Archangel is not a church separated from the rest of the Catholic Church, as you seem to think. It is a building blessed and dedicated to the celebration of the traditional Latin Mass and sacraments, and it is open to all Roman Catholics, and only to Roman Catholics. Nobody is asked to make any other profession of Faith than the Catholic Faith. The sacraments are administered to all Catholics in good standing. The faithful all accept the Holy Father, John Paul II, as the Vicar of Christ and visible head of the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, he is prayed for at every Mass, as are you also, as the Ordinary of the place. If there is something which is not Catholic about such dispositions, I would appreciate it if you would let me know.

Your accusation of the priests and the faithful being in some way out of communion with the Pope and with Rome amounts to an accusation of either heresy or schism. I imagine that you have made this accusation because you have been informed that St. Michael's church attendance has doubled in the past six months, with faithful who refuse to participate in the modern liturgies on principle, and who refuse the new orientations of the spirit of Vatican II. They are leaving their parishes to come to a church run by the priests of the Society of Saint Pius X, and they are doing so not because they are heretics or schismatics, but because they are determined to keep the unchanging Catholic Faith, which has been so well defined by 2,000 years of strong Popes and Catholic Tradition. They refuse the liberal errors of the French Revolution, repeatedly condemned by all the Popes from 1789 until Vatican II, which Cardinal Ratzinger himself called the French Revolution within the Catholic Church.

I somewhat feel that you will find the real heretics and schismatics, who are not in Communion with Rome and the Holy Father, in the parishes which belong to your diocese: those Catholic faithful and priests who no longer believe in the Real Presence or that the Mass is a true, propitiatory sacrifice; who no longer believe that outside the Catholic Church there is no salvation; who no longer believe that pre-marital sex and artificial birth control are always mortal sins; who no longer believe in the sacrament of penance, and the necessity of personal confession to a priest; who no longer believe that only men can be priests...

The parishioners of St. Michael's all believe every defined dogma of Catholic Faith. They are not heretics. Furthermore, they are not schismatics. In the 1983 Code of Canon Law, schism is defined as the refusal of submission to the Sovereign Pontiff, or of communion with the members of the Church who are subject to him (Canon 751). Our faithful would never dream of resisting, or refusing the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, when he teaches on matters of Faith and morals, or when his government of the Church enforces such Faith or morals, nor would it dawn upon them to separate themselves from any Catholic who holds fast to the entirety of the Catholic Faith. It is precisely this insistence on the importance of authority that founds their strong opposition to the revolution brought about by liberalism and modernism within the Church. In fact, our priests would publicly refuse

Holy Communion to any person who refused to adhere to any one dogma, or who refused communion with the Sovereign Pontiff and other Catholics, as is required by the traditional law of the Church (1917 Code, Canon 732, §2).

It is certainly true that we all share strong convictions, and that we are entirely opposed to the modern "renewal" and to modern-day ecumenism, which places the Catholic Church on the same level as the false religions. But in doing so, we found ourselves on Pope Pius XI' encyclical *Mortalium animos*, and on Pope Pius XII decree on Ecumenism, and not at all on our own opinion, as some say. Neither the Pope nor Vatican II can oblige us to go against our Faith or what previous Popes have said. It is in the name of the Pope and of Vatican II that Rome is attempting to impose the modernist revolution, as if it was something infallibly defined, which it manifestly is not. Did not Vatican II declare itself to be a pastoral council, refusing to use its infallible authority to define and condemn? We are not bound to obey the abuse of authority, but we are bound to keep our unchanging Catholic Faith, as defined by the Popes. And for this we are told that we are not in communion with the Pope. I think that you can see how laughable this really is.

I am sorry, but I really resent your accusation of false advertising, and I do ask for an apology. We never claimed to be a part of the diocese, or to have faculties, delegation or permission from yourself. We would certainly welcome them; but if you refuse to grant them, as you have done until now, thus persecuting traditional Catholics, we will maintain our work to provide for the faithful in their necessity, depending upon the supplied jurisdiction that the Catholic Church provides for us. We do claim to be in communion with the Pope, and I believe that I have established to your satisfaction that we are. I do consequently request that you publish a correction in the St. James parish bulletin, correcting this statement about false advertising, and clarifying that we are in communion with Rome. It would be sufficient, if you prefer, to simply make this letter available to the parishioners.

Father Craig Bufé, who lives at Queen of Angels in Dickinson, in your diocese, is the pastor of St. Michael the Archangel. Father Bufé and myself would be very interested in meeting with you to answer your questions, allow you to get to know the clergy of the Society of Saint Pius X, and to see for yourself how strongly we hold to our Catholic Faith, our Catholic Church and our Catholic Tradition.

Asking for your blessing for our work, I remain yours faithfully in Christ Our Lord and His Holy Mother,

Peter R. Scott

Father Peter R. Scott

CC:Fr. Bufé
Fr. Ulm
Mr. J. Davignon

Then the following letter from Bishop Fiorenza appeared in the bulletin of St. James Catholic Church, published April 18, 1999...

**Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Diocese of Galveston-Houston
1700 San Jacinto
Houston, Texas 77001**

March 26, 1999

Dear Father Ulm:

I thank you for your concern about St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church. Despite its name this Church is not an authorized Catholic Church. As canon 515.2 states, "The diocesan bishop alone is competent to enact, suppress or alter parishes."

This church is not a canonically erected parish and is therefore not in union with the Diocese of Galveston-Houston or the Universal Church. Catholics may not attend services there and fulfill their Sunday obligation. For those wishing to attend Mass in Latin, Annunciation and Holy Rosary Parishes both offer Latin Mass on Sunday morning. Mass according to the Missal of Pius V is offered each Sunday at Annunciation at 8:00 a.m.

Further, the clergy associated with the Society of St. Pius X and the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre have no faculties to offer sacraments or to exercise priestly ministry in this diocese.

I hope that this information clarifies the situation for you and your parishioners.

With prayerful best wishes, I am fraternally in Christ,

**Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Bishop of Galveston-Houston**

...to which Fr. Peter Scott replied, since he received no other response from the bishop.



REV. FR. PETER SCOTT'S SECOND RESPONSE

Society of Saint Pius X District of the United States of America REGINA COELI HOUSE

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Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza
Bishop of Galveston-Houston
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Re: St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church, Spring, TX

J.M.J.
April 29, 1999

Your Excellency,

I have not as yet received a response to my letter of April 9, in which I attempted to inform you correctly as to the status and position of St. Michael the Archangel church in Spring. I note that a response was, however, made in the St. James parish bulletin of Sunday April 18. I would, however, have appreciated a more direct answer, one less confrontational, one more open to dialogue.

This response was a letter from yourself to the pastor, Father Ulm, which seems not to take into account the contents of my above mentioned letter, which is not surprising, given that your letter is dated March 26.

You state that St. Michael is "*not an authorized Catholic Church*", and then you quote the Canon that states that only the diocesan bishop is competent to erect parishes. This is of course perfectly correct. This means, and I am sure that this is what you meant to say, that St. Michael's is not an authorized parish in the diocese. However, we have never claimed that it is. You have the only right to erect it into a parish, if you desire to promote the traditional Mass, the practice in its entirety of Catholic Tradition, and the refusal of the novel spirit of Vatican II.

However, even if it is not an authorized parish, it indeed is an authorized Catholic Church, because the Society of Saint Pius X was canonically instituted on November 1, 1970, and received a Decree of Praise from Rome on February 18, 1971. Consequently, all of the chapels and churches of the Society are Catholic and approved, although they are not a parish, and although they do not have a canonical status in the diocese, which only you can give.

It is just as preposterous to affirm that because the chapels of the Society of Saint Pius X have no canonical status for the public celebration of the sacraments and Holy Mass, they are not in union with the universal Church, as it would be to say this of the Franciscans, Dominicans, Redemptorists, or any other Religious Institute in the Catholic Church. The unity of the Church is the oneness of Catholic Dogmas accepted by all Catholics, the same sacraments and the same Sacrifice of the Mass, under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff. This unity is best expressed by traditional Catholics, who accept all Catholic Dogmas, whose Mass and sacraments are always and everywhere celebrated in exactly the same way, and whose dependence upon the authority of the Sovereign Pontiffs is the reason for the strong stand against *the modern errors of our time*, as Pope Pius XII called them in *Humani Generis*.

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The question of fulfilling the Sunday obligation to attend Mass has nothing to do with the canonical status of the church attended. Cardinal Oddi, then Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, made this very clear on March 17, 1984. He was asked by one of our supporters whether attendance at St. Michael the Archangel chapel in Farmingville, NY, would satisfy the Sunday obligation, and His Eminence had this to say: *"According to the new Code of Canon Law, 'The obligation of assisting at Mass is satisfied wherever Mass is celebrated in a Catholic rite either on the day of obligation or in the evening of the previous day'"* (Canon 1248, §1).

I hope that this settles your doubts... *There is no other requirement that the Mass be celebrated in a Catholic rite.* I am sure that you will agree, Your Excellency, that the Tridentine Mass is a very Catholic rite, profoundly anti-protestant and anti-modernist, unlike the new rite. Maybe we would do better to question whether those who assist at the New Mass on Sundays really honor and glorify God as they ought to, really offer up a renewal of the propitiatory Sacrifice of Calvary, really satisfy their Sunday obligation.

As I mentioned previously, the priests of the Society make no claim to have the faculties that you refuse to grant, but operate for the salvation of souls, on the basis of the Supplied Jurisdiction, which the Church herself grants in the state of necessity. This state of necessity is not going to cease simply because you provide two traditional Latin Masses every Sunday. What is this compared to the huge number of modernist aberrations, sacrilegious ceremonies, communions in the hand? How can a traditional Catholic life be based upon a Latin Mass once a week, when you can get to it? How can a profound spiritual life be nourished by an occasional concession conditioned upon the acceptance in principle of the New Mass and Vatican II, when it is precisely Vatican II and the New Mass which are the cause of the problems in the Church?

The state of emergency in your diocese will continue for as long as you persecute those who are faithful to Catholic Tradition; for as long as you do not make the traditional Mass available in every parish in the diocese every Sunday; for as long as you promote the ideas of Vatican II, which destroy priestly identity, the sense of the sacred, the supernatural view of eternity, the necessity of belonging to the Catholic Church, the one and only ark of salvation; for as long as you allow ecumenism and the charismatic and renewal movements in your diocese, to quote just a couple of examples.

For as long as this state of necessity exists, you can be sure that St. Michael's will be there to provide the good traditional faithful with all that their souls thirst for: not only the traditional Mass, but also traditional sermons, the Baltimore catechism, traditional devotions, especially those to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the study of the many encyclicals of the Popes prior to Vatican II that condemned liberalism. St. Michael's will be there to provide traditional sacraments, marriages and funerals. Even if you might choose, alas, not to approve their efforts, you can be sure, Your Excellency, that these Crusaders of the supernatural order of the Catholic Truth, these soldiers of the supernatural life of grace that the Church bestows on our souls, will put aside all human respect and continue the battle.

Since it seems you have decided that this exchange of views is best done in St. James' parish bulletin, I would ask that once more you publish my response, for the instruction of the faithful, and the salvation of their souls.

I would simply like to ask, in concluding, that you pray on, and consider seriously before God, your responsibility as their Shepherd, and that you bestow upon them and upon us your episcopal blessing.

Yours faithfully in the united hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Peter R. Scott

Father Peter R. Scott

CC: Fr. Ulm

Fr. Bufé

Mr. Jack Davignon

As of publication, no answer has been received from Bishop Fiorenza. The only development is that Fr. Ulm has been reassigned.

PRAYER FOR HOLY BISHOPS

Lord, according to Your promise that the Gospel should be preached throughout the whole world, raise up men fit for such work. The Apostles were but soft and yielding clay till they were baked hard by the fire of the Holy Ghost.

So, good Lord, do now in like manner again with Thy Church militant; change and make the soft and slippery earth into hard stones; set in Thy Church strong and mighty pillars that may suffer and endure great labours, watching, poverty, thirst, hunger, cold and heat; which also shall not fear the threatenings of princes, persecution, neither death but always persuade and think with themselves to suffer with a good will, slanders, shame, and all kinds of torments, for the glory and laud of Thy Holy Name. By this manner, good Lord, the truth of Thy Gospel shall be preached throughout all the world.

Therefore, merciful Lord, exercise Thy mercy, show it indeed upon Thy Church.

This prayer was spoken in a sermon by St. John Fisher in 1508, the last year of Henry VII. It was fulfilled in the author's person 27 years later on Tower Hill during the reign of King Henry VIII.