

PAID ADVERTORIAL

## OPEN LETTER TO BISHOP MORLINO

Dear Bishop Morlino,

We, concerned Catholics of the Madison diocese, wish to express our reservations about your leadership and direction of our diocese.

We advise you to leave aside plans for a new cathedral church. That plan cannot be pursued in a financially responsible way. An existing Church could easily serve as our Cathedral.

We are concerned about the poor morale of many priests, religious, and lay ministers, who feel that their contributions to the vision and progress of the diocese are being ignored. You have often proclaimed your communion with the Pope. You must also be in communion with our clergy and people. Truth also arises from the clergy, religious, and faithful of our diocese.

We are dismayed by your recent action to force the termination of the Director of Liturgy of St. Andrew Parish after four years of faithful service and eliminate his livelihood because of your belief that he is not living in accordance with the teaching of the Church. We are unaware of your other terminations of Parish employees who do not follow all of the teachings of the Church. Have you terminated employees for abusing their wives or for supporting an unjust war? Have you removed the livelihood of priests who have sexually abused children?

You have invited the priests of the Society of Jesus Christ the Priest, to serve in four parishes in the diocese. They have brought a pastoral and liturgical approach foreign to the diocese including the banning of females from serving at the altar. The people have had no say in these changes from customary practice in the diocese. Although you have conducted hearings at St. Aloysius parish, you have not responded to the voices of the people.

Who is ministering to the alienated Catholics of these parishes? We know some are joining other Catholic parishes (increasingly long distances), but many have stopped attending Mass, or are looking to Anglican and Protestant churches in the area. Are these people to be written off? You are bishop not only of those in church every Sunday, but also of those who are absent and those who question and doubt.

What is needed is the vision of a reconciling church, constantly reaching out to people to embrace their legitimate hopes, dreams, and differences. We need more compassion not dismissal. We need the kindly mercy of Pope John XXIII and the positive spirit of the Second Vatican Council. We ask that you try to bring us together.

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