



DIOCESE OF COVINGTON

Office of the Bishop
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January 17, 2023

Dear Members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish,

My sincere prayers for peace and unity among us.

I write to inform you that I have requested the resignation of Rev. Shannon Collins, MSJB as pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. I have also removed Rev. Sean Kopczynski, MSJB as Parochial Vicar.

For some time now, I had serious concerns about the parish's pastoral leadership. I attempted to resolve those concerns in conversation and fraternal correction with these priests, who are brothers and sons to me. Regretfully I have been unable to do so. I take this action after becoming aware that Fr. Collins had preached in the parish that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as celebrated in the current Roman Catholic liturgy, is "irrelevant," preserves "literally nothing of the old," and that the reform of the liturgy was motivated by hatred towards traditional Catholics and the ancient liturgies of Rome.

Both Father Collins and Father Kopczynski maintain these errors and refuse the opportunity to renounce them. This disqualifies them from being granted permission to publicly celebrate the Sacraments using the 1962 *Missale Romanum* and from leading a personal parish like Our Lady of Lourdes.

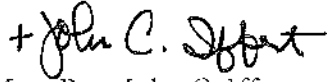
I did not take this action lightly. I consulted with the Vicar General, the Deans, the Judicial Vicar, and brother bishops before determining the action I must take in this situation.

I intend to provide for the pastoral and liturgical care of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and hope to continue this ministry in the Diocese of Covington. There are, however, obstacles. The Board of the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist own the current church building. The Missionaries of St. John the Baptist consider it the chapel of their public association. They are no longer willing to permit the Diocese or Our Lady of Lourdes Parish to use the building. I am seeking an appropriate location for the parish liturgies.

Please be aware that I have removed Father Collins' and Father Kopczynski's faculties, to teach, preach, or celebrate the Sacraments of the Church for the time being. They are to conduct no public ministry. They may celebrate a private Mass for themselves, immediate family members, and members of the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist. They are not permitted to celebrate the Mass publicly. Please do not ask them to violate this restriction.

You are in my constant prayer as I work to resolve these difficulties and provide faithful and true pastoral leadership for Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. I recognize and thank you for the sincerity of your faith and the strength of your love for Christ and His Church. That love should always lead us to walk together with the Lord in a spirit of communion, humility, and respect for one another. Let us pray for one another and for the unity of the Church.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ John C. Iffert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Rev. John C. Iffert
Bishop of Covington