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Removed Oregon pastor scheduled to meet with bishop

by Dan Morris-Young

NCR Today

Bend controversy

Fr. James Radloff, who was removed as pastor from St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Bend, Ore., Oct. 1, 2013, has been invited to meet with Baker Bishop Liam Cary in early April when the priest travels to Bend for ?routine medical tests which he has for his cancer every year at this time,? said Fr. Thomas Faucher on March 23.

A canon lawyer and Radloff's adviser, Faucher filed an appeal to the Vatican on Radloff's behalf with the Congregation for Clergy after Cary formally removed Radloff as pastor. Radloff, who has yet to be reassigned to another parish, has been staying with his mother in Chicago since his ouster.

Announced Feb. 14 in Bend, the Congregation's Jan. 31 ruling supported Cary and allowed him to keep secret the reasons for the removal and maintain a ban on public ministry for Radloff.

Part of Radloff's petition to the Vatican was that the reasons for his termination be made public. Radloff and Faucher have provided with those reasons but are sworn to confidentiality.

When Radloff was removed, Cary told parishioners Radloff had done nothing illegal, praised his work at St. Francis, and declared he remained a priest in good standing. Neither the bishop nor diocese has stated otherwise since Oct. 1, 2013, although Cary withdrew his announced assignment of Radloff without title to Merrill, a town of about 900 near the sprawling diocese's California border, after a public statement from Radloff was released Oct. 30 by Faucher.

Faucher told *NCR* March 23 that Radloff received permission from Cary to say publicly that the bishop

and priest will be meeting. Radloff has not spoken directly to the press since his removal, Faucher said.

Faucher said "the one thing that Fr. Radloff really wants is to be a fully active Roman Catholic priest. That is his goal."

Faucher had no details on a time, place or agenda for the meeting.

Meanwhile, a group of Radloff supporters which has been meeting weekly since November 2013 will continue to gather Friday evenings as well as join the Tuesday and Thursday evening adoration of the Holy Eucharistic which takes place at the historic St. Francis of Assisi Church, according to participants.

[Dan Morris-Young is *NCR* West Coast Correspondent.]

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