

Bishop Moves To Remove Beloved Priest Who Preaches Against Sins Of Liberalism, Vaccine Mandates, Wicked Clergy

https://thefederalist.com/2021/05/25/bishop-moves-to-remove-beloved-priest-who-preaches-against-sins-of-liberalism-vaccine-mandates-wicked-clergy/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=the-federalist-daily-briefing-2021-05-25&utm_term=2021-05-25

The same homilies that made a local priest in a beaten-down part of western Wisconsin an international draw also attracted attacks from the city's left-wing newspaper.

MAY 25, 2021 By [Christopher Bedford](#)

Internationally popular priest Fr. James Altman was asked to resign from St. James the Less Catholic Church in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Friday.

The priest, who was happily surprised (and noticeably bashful) [to grow in national](#) and international status among traditional Catholics over the past year, was asked to resign by Bishop of La Crosse William Callahan Friday, Altman [announced at Sunday Mass](#). Although the letter hasn't been released, Altman told the parish the charges were that he was ineffective and caused division in the Catholic Church — two charges that are contradicted by fundraising and attendance records set for the parish under the priest's leadership.

Altman's homilies have gone viral over the past year, beginning with a fiery broadside against the modern Democratic Party's pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage, pro-transgender platform, but zeroing in on failures in Catholic Church leadership [to teach the catechism](#), keep the faithful coming to church, police sexual sins and abusers in the clergy, [positively affect the culture, maintain a moral influence on politics](#), and most recently, simply [keep their doors open](#) amidst COVID-19 panics and secular leaders' demands that worship end or be severely curtailed.

“I don’t mind if people have different sets of beliefs, certainly in this country we are entitled to that via the Constitution,” Altman’s told [The Federalist Radio Hour in an October 2020 interview](#), “but what I do mind is when someone lies about it. There are far too many laymen and clergy alike who present error in the message they are giving.”

Watch Fr. Altman’s first viral homily:

The same homilies that made a local priest in a beaten-down part of western Wisconsin an international draw also attracted attacks from the city’s left-wing newspaper — and [condemnation](#) from his bishop.

“For the record,” Altman said in his Pentecost Sunday homily disclosing the letter and addressing its charges, “through my efforts at preaching the truth, somehow — very unintended — the truth has gone ‘viral’ over the past 11 months and people all over the globe, as far away as Borneo, [Italy] have written over 4,000 letters and cards — more than that in emails — all saying the same thing: ‘We’re starving out here.’”

[In his Sunday homily](#), he announced he has retained a canon law attorney and intends to appeal the decision to the Vatican. In the meantime, he hopes to appoint a parish administrator to take charge of the parish while he remains “a pastor without duties until the appeal goes through Rome, which could take upwards of a year.”

As of Monday night, [a donation site set up to raise money for Altman’s canon defense](#) had raised more than \$136,000 — far surpassing its goal of \$20,000. Altman most recently angered the local paper (and the bishop) [by](#) opening the doors of his church wide on Easter Sunday, allegedly not enforcing mask mandates, and by criticizing secular leaders who tried to close churches, shut down society, and demand all Americans receive the novel, emergency COVID-19 vaccine. His preaching has been especially targeted at those Catholic clergy who have joined forces with the secular leaders and even closed their own churches in a time of disease and confusion.

While [large indoor gatherings at sporting events in Texas](#) have thus far failed to cause any spikes in cases, and the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down mask mandates, the bishop has told churches [to continue](#) following the arbitrary “science” of their local county leaders. The Catholic Church might be the last absolute monarchy in existence, but clergy who understand the rules still have the right to appeal decisions — even those made by their bishops — to the seat of the church in Rome.

“What really is at play here, dear family, is that other shepherds are offended that I simply state the fact that they have abandoned their sheep in a time of need,” Altman said at his Sunday homily. “As you’ve heard me say so many times, if this alleged virus was allegedly a fraction as dangerous as they said it was, all the more reason to keep our churches open and get you the sacraments so you stay in a state of grace.”

They put your eternal souls at risk. They despise me for speaking that simple truth, for speaking the truth that Jesus commanded his Apostles: As the Father has sent me so I send you, even though I know the world is going to hate you I send you to baptize, to forgive the repentant and to feed my sheep.

Listen to Fr. Altman’s Pentecost Sunday homily:

“I fed my sheep over 60,000 Holy Eucharist in the past 14 months on the tongue and afterward... I wash my fingers into the chalice, which means that I have drunk the germs of 60,000 people!” he continued to laughter.

But I am unafraid. I couldn’t do it if I were afraid. I’m not afraid, but what is better than that is neither are the 60,000 faithful recipients; we are not afraid. Dear family, I have not failed to feed my sheep the Bread of Life. I don’t know how any ordained priest or bishop or cardinal has failed to feed his children. I don’t know — I don’t have an answer for you. But I do know this: I am not the divisive one, I am not the ineffective one, I am not the one disrespecting my office. They have done a great job of being divisive. They have done a great job of being ineffective; they have done a great job of disrespecting their office all by themselves without any

help from me. That is why they despise me — because that is the truth, and the truth hurts. So, dear family, if I have any words to give you as a gift, perhaps a parting gift on this Pentecost, those words are ‘thank you.’

According to Altman, his church has already matched last year’s parish giving, more than doubled their collections at Mass (which includes visitors to the church), nearly doubled their donations to the diocesan appeal since he took over in May 2017, and since he gained international recognition, raised \$230,000 in outside contributions for special projects, including repairing the stained glass windows, fixing “the badly leaking roofs” in the parish rectory and school, and hopefully rebuilding the ramp and adding a first-floor bathroom for elderly and handicapped parishioners and visitors.

He also counted 42 new families joining in the past 16 months, and double the annual baptisms since his first year. Both on fiscal and faithful counts, both of St. James the Less Church’s trends buck the national and global trends of the past 60 years, when church attendance has fallen dramatically. The record stands in stark contrast to the charge of ineffectiveness by the bishop.

In response to the news, which drew audible cries of “No!” from the parish, supporters obtained police permission for Sunday afternoon prayers in the street in front of the rectory.

“Something inspired me to go up on the roof to bless them and sprinkle them with epiphany water,” Altman told The Federalist. “Look what happened.”