



CHARLES M. WILSON
PROCURATOR AD LITEM
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February 1, 2017

Dear Fellow Parishioners, Parents of Atonement Academy Students and Friends of the Parish,

I am one of three parishioners who was involved with our parish before Father Phillips arrived in San Antonio in 1982 and have witnessed quite a few crises over the course of our history. Right now, we are facing a crisis that threatens the very existence of our parish and our right to our unique spirituality, which has been given to us or confirmed by Popes Bl. Paul VI, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.

At the time Our Lady of the Atonement was erected on August 15, 1983, we faced our future full of hope and have, for the most part, not been disappointed. There were a few bumps along the road; although nothing like this. Now, everything we have worked and sacrificed for the past thirty-four years is under threat. Truly, this is our darkest hour; but I cannot believe that Our Lady would have nourished and protected us all those years just to abandon us now. After all, this is Christ's Church and in the end, he will be victorious, no matter how grim things may appear in the immediate future. However, we must do our part. We need to pray, keep calm, stay focused and, above all, stand together, with St. Joseph and Our Lady at our side.

A year after our parish was erected, a non-profit organization was incorporated under the laws of Texas. Its name is the Saint Joseph Foundation and its mission is to assist Catholics in defending their rights in the Church by using the canonical processes that have been established by ecclesiastical authority for that purpose. I retired as executive director in 2014 and our offices have moved to Ohio, yet I remain here in San Antonio as Chairman of the Board of Directors and publisher of the newsletter, *Christifidelis*, which some of you have read. We have provided canonical counsel, **always free of charge**, of the highest quality to faithful Catholics throughout the United States and Canada. We have handled appeals all the way to the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura in Rome. In short, there is no comparable canonical resource anywhere in the world and it is at your disposal.

There are now two separate cases. One involves the status of Father Phillips as our pastor. The other is the parishioners acting together to protect our patrimony. It is very fortunate that the Code of Canon Law now in force provides us with the legal tools to do just that. If you want to join in, there are four things you can do.

1. Pray for everyone involved on both sides of this controversy. This is the most important.
2. **Next, sign the enclosed Procurator's Mandate, have it witnessed and return it to me at the address shown, or you can return it after Mass on February 12th. By doing this, you will be helping Father Phillips and the parish at the same time.**
3. Send an email to mary@saveatonement.org and ask to be added to the email list. This will insure that you will be kept advised of all the latest developments.
4. Check our website at www.saveatonement.org to keep informed.

We have rights in the Church just as we have rights under the Constitution of the United States. Among the former is our right to follow our own form of spirituality, such as we have here at Our Lady of the Atonement (canon 214). If that right is threatened or abridged, we have both the freedom and the duty to protect it. The text of relevant canons follow.

Canon 212, §3. *According to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church **and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful**, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence toward their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons.* (Emphasis added.)

Canon 221, §1 *The Christian faithful can legitimately vindicate and defend the rights which they possess in the Church in the competent ecclesiastical forum according to the norm of law.*

I understand that the question as to whether Our Lady of the Atonement remains as a personal parish of the Archdiocese or becomes a parish of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Peter is before the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. If the decision is in favor of the Ordinariate, as we pray that it will, then we are home free and can rejoice. However, in my long experience in handling appeals to Rome, I have learned that it is most unwise to anticipate a favorable decision, no matter how strong your case may be. While waiting to hear from Rome, it is always best to prepare for an unfavorable decision and that is what we are doing here. The old maxim, "hope for the best and prepare for the worst," comes to mind.

If further action is necessary, any parishioner can act as an individual. Nonetheless, it is far more convenient and effective for parishioners to act together by appointing a common proxy, or procurator, to act for them. And the more mandates he or she has, the better. I already have approximate 150 as a result of the meeting last Thursday. Father Phillip's canon lawyer has urged me to reach out to all the parishioners who were not at that meeting and give them an opportunity to sign mandates.

Space does not allow me to give more extensive canonical arguments that support what we are doing. Please watch for them to be posted on our website.

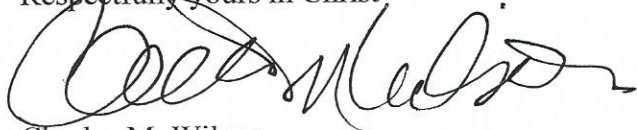
The threat faced by our parish is extremely grave and I earnestly request that you act without delay.

Our Lady of the Atonement, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, pray for us.

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle.

Respectfully yours in Christ



Charles M. Wilson