

A Proposed Model for Letter to Newspaper or Other Group Regarding Closing of Parish

I am a [We are] parishioner[s] of _____ [name of parish] parish in the Arch/Diocese of _____. On _____ [date] we were informed that our church would be permanently closed on _____ [date] and that the parish would cease to exist [or -- would be merged with _____ parish].

_____ [Insert a bit on your parish if desired, such as "We are a parish of _____ families, founded in _____, with an elementary school ", etc.].

_____ [number] parishes (churches) have been ordered closed/suppressed in our Arch/Diocese under _____ [name of reorganization plan]. The reasons for which parishes are suppressed are: _____ [list criteria for closings].

Our parish does not fulfill these criteria. Our parish is [list any positive qualities of parish that contradict the criteria for closure]. [If your parish meets some criteria but not others, write "Although our parish [or church] _____ [whatever criteria for closure it meets], it does not _____ [criteria for closure it does not meet].

On the other hand, our parish _____ [list possible reasons for suppression of church. Examples: financial needs of archdiocese and high value of real estate; large bank account; conflicts between pastor or parishioners and bishop; other factors].

Given this conflict between the Arch/Diocese's stated policies and the situation in our parish, we suspect that our church is actually being closed because [summarize suspected motives for closing your church]. We believe this is unjust.

Those who disagree with the closing of their church and suppression of their parish have been instructed to _____ [summarize mechanism for appeal in your diocese, if any].

We have _____ [summarize actions taken such as appeal to bishop, etc.]. The result of these actions were _____ [summarize results of these actions].

What we would suggest as a means of dealing with the problems identified by the Arch/Diocese as they relate to our parish is _____ [suggest concrete alternatives, compromise plans, etc.].

We believe this is reasonable and would _____ [insert how this would resolve problem, such as raising money for diocese or lessening need for priest's service, etc.] without destroying our beloved parish community.

Sincerely,

_____ [Name]

Member of _____ parish [or name of committee one represents]