

JULY 31, 2023

What is a decree suspending effects of a decree?

This means that the merger or suppression of the parish is put on hold until the resolution of the case by the Dicastery for the Clergy.

Why did Archbishop Rozanski decree a suspension of effects?

Archbishop Rozanski decided to suspend the effect of these decrees because he respects the fact that recourse is pending with the Dicastery for the Clergy, which will eventually render a decision regarding the case.

What does suspending effects mean on a practical level for a parish?

- Financial accounts should not be closed or merged if a suspension of effects is decreed.
- Finance Councils should not be dissolved or merged if a suspension of effects is decreed.
- Many parishes have created interim Mass schedules to offer a variety of Mass times to the faithful with a view of the number of priests assigned to the parishes. Suspending effects will not affect current or interim Mass schedules.
- Parish Pastoral Councils and advisory committees are able to work together where possible to mutually collaborate.
- A decree of suspending of effects will not affect upcoming school decisions.
- All of our parish communities are asked to re-evaluate their current pastoral care, social outreach and evangelization efforts to see how they can be improved.

How long will the suspension of effects be in place?

The merger or suppression of the parish will be put on hold until a decision is given by the Dicastery for the Clergy. This will likely take several months.

How long will it take for the Dicastery for the Clergy to make a decision on recourse?

While there is no timeline for the Dicastery for the Clergy to make a decision, it is likely that the process will take several months.

Is there a difference between a pastor and a parochial administrator?

A parochial administrator is a priest temporarily entrusted with the pastoral care of a parish under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share. The parochial administrator is bound by the same obligations and possesses the same rights as a pastor. As a temporary caretaker, a parochial administrator is not permitted to do anything which prejudices the rights of the pastor or can harm parish goods.

What does it mean “to do nothing which would prejudice the rights or the parish goods”?

The instruction means that the pastor should not make changes in parish life which would be difficult to reverse, such as combining the registration data of two parishes into a single database. The instruction also means that the pastor should not sell parish property. The instruction does not mean that the pastor should do nothing at all. The pastor should continue to make those changes which can be reversed if needed and those changes which fit with collaboration between two parishes.

How should a pastor respond if part of his parish has recourse?

A pastor should respect the fact that all the faithful can legitimately vindicate and defend their rights in the Church in the competent ecclesiastical forum according to the norm of the law.

