

Press Release

February 15, 2011

On September 8, 2008, members of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Adams filed an appeal with the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy, asking for the overturning of decrees issued by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield which merged by suppression St. Stan's Parish, and closed canonically the parochial church.

Today, we received a four-page decree from the Congregation regarding our appeal, signed by the prefect, His Eminence Mauro Cardinal Piacenza. While the language of the decree is complex, it has been reviewed carefully by us and by our canonical legal advisers. In essence, the Congregation's decision affirms the Diocesan decree relating to the suppression and merger of St. Stan's Parish, but overturns the decree that resulted in the canonical closing of our church. As a result, St. Stan's must be reopened as a place of Catholic divine worship.

We can only speculate as to how the Bishop of Springfield, the Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell, will implement this historic decision. His position grants him a great deal of latitude, and there are a number of different arrangements that could be made regarding the future canonical status of St. Stan's church. For example, he could affiliate St. Stan's church with the nearby Parish of Pope John Paul the Great, or choose to make it "a faith community without borders" by affiliating it directly with the Diocese of Springfield.

Over 200 parishioners of St. Stan's have been in a 24/7 peaceful and prayerful vigil since December 26, 2008. We look forward to a respectful dialogue with Bishop McDonnell in an effort to bring our vigil to a conclusion and to reopen St. Stan's church in a manner that will best serve the interests of the Catholic Community of Adams, as well as the Diocese of Springfield. We are open to a wide range of solutions that may be proposed by the Bishop, whom we hold in great esteem, to preserve St. Stan's church as a Roman Catholic place of worship.

- Mrs Laurie Haas

Adams, MA