

Locked doors and a vacationing bishop

JULY 22, 2015

Dear Members of the L.A. Diocese:

July 19, 2015 marks the third-consecutive Sunday the St. James the Great congregation has worshipped outside our sanctuary. While we dodged the rain by a few hours, our "Mass on the Grass" was hot and humid with little shade.

Meanwhile, the perfectly usable and unsold St. James the Great property remains empty, locked and unavailable to us. As the bishop enjoys his month-long vacation, none of the support promised to us by him has materialized. Forgive us if we feel that Bishop Bruno and his loyal staff have declared open season on our congregation.

To date, we have received no communication, no cooperation and no support from any of the several communications sent to diocesan COO David Tumilty, the bishop's appointed liaison to St. James the Great. Despite having written commitments based on the only meeting with Bishop Bruno on June 9, nothing promised has materi-

alized. The appointed diocesan representative that makes her way down to the church once a week claims she has attempted to contact Rev. Cindy but not a single call has been received.

This week the St. James the Great website was taken over by diocesan leadership through its control of the "Digital Faith Network." Fortunately, we control our own website (www.save-saintjamesthegreat.org) and are able to speak the truth without censorship. While we are able to bring forth the truth, we wonder how many [church] websites are controlled by the diocese. Under the current leadership, they think they can sell your building, seize your bank account, your phones, your computers and your website and even manipulate others to access your payroll; all the while keeping your personal items locked in the building with no communication. It's called a hostile takeover in the corporate world, but the church is stuck in the Middle Ages and believes this is acceptable behavior.

Yet our priest and congrega-

tion continue on. We have been fortunate to find homes to have choir and chant practice, our hospitality team still serves amazing food at our coffee hour, and outreach programs continue amidst this storm. We do wonder however, while the bishop is on vacation, who is minding the store? Where is our "local" suffragan bishop? Why hasn't she attended one of our outdoor services as other clergy have? Silence everywhere.

The structure of the church seems to be out of touch with the 21st century model of transparency, social networking and global communication. Instead, we now see church authorities suing donors and nuns. Where is Christian charity, peace, and justice? What has the church become?

Many individuals have contacted us regarding the abuse of power and finances by the bishop. We invite you to visit our website, read our documents and join our complaint against the outrageous actions of Bishop Bruno. Feel free to add your own addendum with examples



Photo by SUSAN HOFFMAN

of abuses to our complaint and join us in making the case that the L.A. Diocese deserves better leadership. Nothing changes without knowledge, awareness, courage and prayer. Send your e-mails to contact@save saintjamesthegreat.org

Please know that you are all formally invited and absolutely welcome to join us as we worship across the street from our vacant and locked church build-

ing Sunday mornings in Lido Park at 10 a.m., rain or shine. And by the way, we continue to grow.

Respectfully,
THE PARISHIONERS OF
ST. JAMES THE GREAT
EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
NEWPORT BEACH CA

cc: Standing Committee of the Diocese;
Directors of the Corporation of
the Diocese

See the latest regarding our efforts to save the church, including a letter from the national church regarding Bishop Bruno's alleged violations and related media coverage at www.savesaintjamesthegreat.org.