



THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE OF SAN JOAQUIN

THE CENTRAL THIRD OF CALIFORNIA

*THE RT. REV. JERRY A. LAMB, BISHOP
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PRESS RELEASE

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On Friday March 26, the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin filed a lawsuit against the former members of St. John's, Porterville. This lawsuit is a continuation of the Diocese's litigation efforts seeking the return of property from a number parish Churches that are currently occupied by former members of The Episcopal Church who have sought to affiliate with a different denomination. On February 8, a suit was filed against the former members of St. Francis, Turlock, A similar suit was filed against former members of St. Michael's, Ridgecrest on February 26. A third lawsuit was filed against former members of St. Columba, Fresno on March 11.

Unfortunately, such litigation became necessary after the invitations of the Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Jerry Lamb, to discuss the orderly return of the Churches were largely ignored. "It is particularly disappointing given the recent and unequivocal decisions of the California Supreme Court and Court of Appeals' rulings that the properties and assets are held for the Episcopal Church and its Dioceses", said Diocesan Chancellor Michael Glass.

The litigation is focused on returning the properties and assets to the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin. Glass confirmed that the litigation will not be initially seeking monetary judgments against individual defendants "unless it becomes evident that such defendants have diverted parish assets to other purposes or parties."

The parish litigation is in addition to the Diocese's pending litigation against the former Bishop, which is now before the Fifth District Court of Appeal for review of the trial court's determination that: (a) Bishop Lamb is the Bishop of the Diocese and incumbent of the Corporation Sole and other Diocesan entities; and (b) the attempts to modify the Diocesan Constitution and Canons and Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation Sole to disaffiliate the Episcopal Diocese from the Episcopal Church were null and void. The Court of Appeal has not issued a decision.

Bishop Lamb reiterated that regardless of whether or not litigation is pending, "the Diocese remains committed to working with any parties to facilitate the return of the

properties so that we can all be about the work that Christ has called us to undertake in His Name.”

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