

Recourse Against Administrative Decrees

Church law provides the opportunity for those claiming to be aggrieved by a decree to seek recourse in accord with the Code of Canon Law (canons 1732 through 1739). Before initiating formal recourse, and within ten (10) business days of the legal notification of the decree effecting the parishes (canon 1734 §2), a written petition from a person (canon 96) who considers himself or herself aggrieved by the decree effecting the parishes must be directed to:

Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia
222 N 17 Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

If the Archbishop's response leaves the person who considers himself or herself aggrieved still dissatisfied, then the author of the initial petition seeking revocation or amendment of this decree has fifteen (15) business days to initiate formal recourse to the Congregation for the Clergy (canon 1737 §2). Should the Archbishop not respond to the initial petition, the time period for the person who considers himself or herself aggrieved to initiate formal recourse begins on the thirtieth day after the petition for revocation or amendment was submitted (canon 1735).

In these instances, the recourse is addressed to the Congregation for the Clergy. This can be submitted directly to the following address:

His Eminence, Cardinal Beniamino Stella
Prefect
Congregation for the Clergy
Piazza Pio XII 3
00193 Rome, Italy

Or, through the office of the Apostolic Nunciature:

Apostolic Nunciature
United States of America
3339 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008-3610

Or, through the office of Most Reverend Charles Chaput (address above)

The person making recourse against a decree has the right to engage the services of a canon lawyer (canon 1738).