

Account of Phone Conversation of Tuesday, May 29, 2012

Having alerted Bishop Zurek by more than one email in the days prior to May 28 that previously scheduled taping with EWTN was about to take place, and that therefore I needed his permission to carry it out, I flew to EWTN on May 28th.

Janet Morana also came there separately, and so did Fr. Denis Wilde. The arrangement was that Fr. Wilde would tape on the set with Janet unless and until I received permission to do so myself.

On the morning of Tuesday the 29th, having not heard yet from the bishop, Fr. Dave Deibel, who was also with me at EWTN, called the bishop's office and left him a message to call either Fr. Dave or me. Meanwhile, Janet began the taping of the series with those segments that only she does alone.

Also, in the meantime, Mike Warsaw and Doug Keck, the top officials of EWTN, had agreed to meet with me, Fr. Dave, and Janet at 11am CT that morning so that we could update them on the current status with the bishop.

At approximately 10:30am, I received a call from the Bishop. He asked me what I needed to discuss and I brought up the decision from the Congregation, stating that I presumed that he had seen it.

He then proceeded to tell me that he had seen it, and that he was restoring, effective immediately, my priestly faculties. He used the words "without restriction."

I then asked him two questions.

First, I asked if that meant I could resume the taping and broadcasting on EWTN, and he said, "Yes, I have no problem with that."

Second, I asked, "What about my activities and ministry outside the diocese?" His response was, "That's what I mean... Your faculties are restored without restriction, effective immediately."

He also made mention of the Apostolic Visitation, and indicated that it "would probably take a while" and that the questions related to Priests for Life that this would raise would be handled later.

Upon the conclusion of this call, I informed Fr. Dave, and then the two of us informed Mike Warsaw and Doug Keck about this in the scheduled meeting that we then had.

Mike Warsaw then indicated to me that he wanted to talk to the bishop himself, so as to be able to say that he had been in direct communication with him. Mike called and spoke with the bishop within a few hours of our meeting. Later that same afternoon, Mike came to the studio where I was working and told me and Janet that he had spoken with the bishop, and that the bishop had a) confirmed what he had told me, namely, that I had permission to tape and broadcast on EWTN, and b) that he and I would be meeting to hammer out a public statement to which we and EWTN could then refer when questions arose about my status and about why the EWTN broadcasts had resumed.

Then Mike asked to talk to me privately on the side, and he said, "The one additional thing the bishop said was that now, this was in Fr. Frank's hands, and that if he didn't abide by the conditions we set forth, that he and I (that is, Mike) would be having a conversation again."

I explained to Mike that this was consistent with what the bishop had told me in the past, namely, that if I abided by the arrangements we made, that he would not stand in the way of my ministry.