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Pastor Tries To Remove Sacred Objects From Closing Church

Parishioners Say Move Violates Canon Law

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BOSTON -- There was more controversy Monday at St. Jeremiah's Parish in Framingham, Mass., which the archdiocese plans to close at the end of the week.

Video

 [Kelley Tuthill Reports On Church](#)

NewsCenter 5's Kelley Tuthill reported that some parishioners who are staying in the church as part of a vigil were outraged when the pastor began moving items days before the scheduled closing.

Workers at St. Jeremiah's began carrying boxes out of the church Monday.

"They've taken the sacred objects out of the church. According to Canon Law, you wait as long as you have an appeal pending. We do have one right now at the archdiocese. They are not supposed to remove anything," parishioner Jackie Lemmerhirt said.

Parishioners celebrated a final Mass Sunday and in the bulletin, the Rev. Ron Calhoun wrote the altar and tabernacle would be heading to a church in Rhode Island. Other sacred items will be moved to the so-called welcoming parish at nearby St. George's.

"I think it's a shame. It's premature," parishioner Mary Anne Mendenhall said.

An archdiocese spokesman called it a misunderstanding, that no sacred items should be removed until after Friday. The move was abruptly halted.

"The pastor was called by archdiocese of Boston saying it was a violation of Canon Law to remove the sacred objects. The pastor came out and apologized," Mendenhall said.

Some think the controversy signals a new approach by the archdiocese.

"I think that what this pastor started and has now stopped because it is a violation of Canon Law, reflects a get tough policy on the part of the archdiocese," Council of Parishes spokesman Peter Borre said.

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