

[Home](#) > [News & Opinion](#) > [Columnists](#) >  [RSS Feed](#)

Spitz: Keeping the faith for a year

By [Julia Spitz](#)
Sunday, May 7, 2006

"A year isn't so long," said Wayne Larkin, sitting in the unlit office by the front doors of St. Jeremiah Church.

Not when you're talking about saving your spiritual home.

"It went by quickly," said Linda Ty-Casper, her back to the window that looks out on the sanctuary where Delina Sannicandro was praying the rosary.

This morning, the Catholic church on Brook Street won't be as quiet as it was Friday morning.

Today's 10:15 Mass marks the one-year anniversary of round-the-clock vigil on Framingham's Northside.

"Officially, it's closed. Spiritually, it's open," said Ty-Casper, who joined the parish in 1960, and last year joined the vigil to keep the parish open when the Boston archdiocese ordered it closed.

For awhile, there was no spiritual leader.

Now Msgr. William Roche, a retired priest who lives at Regina Cleri in Boston, comes to lead Mass on Sundays.

"He's so good," said vigiler Ann Capobianco. "He's wonderful."

"He said we're growing, maturing spiritually," said Ty-Casper.

"Being allowed to have a priest on Sundays is a small victory, I'd say," said Larkin.

He hopes for victory on other fronts as well.

Parishioners are pursuing a canonical appeal with the Vatican's apostolic signatura after the initial appeal to Rome was denied earlier this year.

"According to canon law, there are several things the archdiocese has done wrong. There are several things that look good for us and for other churches in vigil in the Boston area," Larkin said at the end of his overnight vigil shift Friday.

Not everyone agrees.

"We're being snubbed by some former parishioners," said Larkin. "A lot of them are considering us doing the devil's work because we're disobeying" the archdiocese.

"They think we're militant, and it's not like that at all," said Capobianco.

"We just feel abandoned by the archdiocese," said Ty-Casper.

But the archdiocese is paying the church's bills while the vigil continues, said Larkin, and there have been many bright spots in recent weeks.

"The church was radiant" on Easter, when more than 400 people attended the service, he said, and Capobianco was moved by the First Communion service Roche led.

"There are those who think He's not here. I think He's still here," said Larkin.

"It is an interesting time," said Ty-Casper.

About three miles down the road at St. Anselm in Sudbury, parishioners understand just how interesting "interesting" can be.

They, too, have been in vigil. Theirs started 20 months ago. Since then, the archdiocese has decided to keep St. Anselm open as a church, but not a parish.

Herald Interactive Tools



[Related articles](#)



[E-mail article to a friend](#)



[View graphic version](#)



[Get RSS feed](#)



[Search site](#)



[Sign up for home delivery](#)

"We're just waiting and waiting," said Amy Lepak, sitting in the kitchen of the Landham Road church Friday at 9 a.m. "We're waiting to have a decree that reopens us."

"And we're waiting to find out who the pastor will be," said her husband, Jim Scholten, seated across the table. Then he corrected himself. "They don't call it a pastor. They call it a rector. We're not going to be a parish. We're going to be a church."

What's the difference?

"That's what the decree is. It spells out what a church is. It will define what we'll be able to do," said Lepak.

"We assume the vigil will end" with the decree, she said, but "we don't know when the decree will come. It could be next month or in the fall."

For now, parishioners are happy 19 children will receive First Communion today, happy they have a priest of their own, at least part time. The archdiocese assigned the Rev. James DiPerri to St. Anselm last year.

"He is a gift from God," said vigiler Gail Trainor. "He's brought a depth of spirituality to the parish."

There are still scars from the way the archdiocese handled its decision to close or redefine parishes, including Sacred Heart in Natick, St. Mary and St. Ann in Marlborough and Our Lady of Assumption in Bellingham.

"Had they gone to all the churches and said, 'This is the situation, what can you do?' they would have been amazed. People are creative and talented and willing to help," said Trainor.

"There wasn't just one solution," said Lepak.

"Maybe it should be all churches should be closed. See who cares enough" to keep theirs open, said Trainor.

If that had been the case, St. Jeremiah wouldn't be marking a one-year anniversary today.

"Things happen for a reason," said Capobianco.

(Julia Spitz can be reached at 508-626-3968 or jspitz@cnc.com.)

Related articles

 [Letter: What about other faiths?](#)

Today's most read articles Updated 9:30 AM ET

1. [Beneath Nyanza: Tour of property proves looks can be deceiving](#)(404)
2. [Final credits for Movie Loft](#)(346)
3. [What time did that bus leave, anyway?](#)(324)
4. [Police probe attempted abduction reports at park](#)(268)
5. [Police log from Sunday, May 7, 2006](#)(268)

Search the site

Enterprise-level broadband service provided by [Expedient: America's Largest All-Ethernet Network](#)

Wireless broadband ser
[Towerstream](#)



[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)]

Order Home Delivery Online: [Weekly papers](#) [Daily papers](#) or call **1.800.982.4023**

© Copyright of CNC and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)

bh.heraldinteractive.com: 0.009055:Sat, 06 May 2006 15:40:22 GMT cached