



Feast of the Assumption of the BVM
An Open Letter to Archbishop Jackels

Archbishop Michael O. Jackels
1229 Mount Loretta Ave.
Dubuque, IA 52003-7286

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Coalition for Canceled Priests, I wish to share my disappointment over your 8/12/21 statement about Aquinas Communications FM 98.3 KCRD and Fr. James Altman.

I note with interest that you did not mention the name of the radio station in your letter. Why did you not share with those in your Archdiocese the Values, Mission, and Vision of KCRD? Please permit me the opportunity to present them here for your review:

Values

Aquinas Communications values

**The Family and Holy Matrimony; Life, Liberty, and Personal Property Rights;
Subsidiarity; and Critical Thinking.**

Mission

**Aquinas Communications is an apostolate of the Catholic Laity.
Our mission is to educate people on the Truth of Jesus Christ;
to be loyal to the Catholic Church's Magisterial Authority,
to The Catholic Church's Sacred Tradition, and Holy Scripture.**

Vision

**Our vision is a world culture grounded in Catholic Tradition, making a better life for people,
and for each person to become saints with everlasting life in Heaven.**

One would hope that a Catholic Archbishop would cheer an apostolate of the Catholic laity like KCRD that operates in his Archdiocese. Especially one that values *critical thinking*, something that has been lacking in public discourse the last several decades. KCRD airs both EWTN and Relevant Radio programming. I think we can agree that neither of these outlets are schismatic. In fact, KCRD is following Mother Angelica who wanted her network to be independent of the bishops. Some bishops at the time took umbrage with her - but given the fruits of Mother Angelica's labors -I have no doubt that one day she will be declared a saint.

I find your argument for using the term "Catholic" to be a strawman argument. I scoured the KCRD website for any claims on the word "Catholic" and there are none. Their Mission Statement in fact seems to support what you said in your statement, "Its directors are Catholic. It airs Catholic programs." They seem to take Canon 212 of the *Code of Canon Law* seriously. Following Canon 212 might cause the ire of certain members of the hierarchy, but I hope you agree that the laity and



clergy under your care have the right and duty to voice their concerns and objections- even if you disagree. Moreover, just as they should voice such concerns respectfully and clearly, your response should be one of a loving father- with the utmost charity.

With all due respect to your office, your statement lacked even nominal charity towards members of your flock and Fr. James Altman, a fellow priest in the Lord's vineyard. I showed your statement to a priest canonist and he simply said, "As far as Canon Law is concerned, one cannot fault the archbishop's argument. Nevertheless, it appears rather inane to claim that the radio station isn't Catholic because it is hosting Fr. Altman. In other words, although the argument is canonically sound, it makes the archbishop rather disreputable." You seem to "cherry pick" what Fr. Altman says to bolster your argument. I am honored to consider Fr. Altman a friend and confidant. While he and I have a different style of speaking, I admire his sincerity and forthrightness and so do tens of thousands of laity who find this lacking from so many bishops and priests.

You seem irritated by how the laity have responded stating, "If that wasn't bad enough, the room full of Catholics who paid money to hear that priest [Fr. Altman] speak, hooted and hollered, clapping loudly in approval" The laity are fed up with a hierarchy that seems to have given into secular culture. In short, your statement comes across as, with all due respect, tone deaf. The Church is dwindling and the Archdiocese of Dubuque is a perfect example of this collapse. Before the Second Vatican Council, Dubuque was nicknamed "Little Rome." It had a large presbyterate, many beautiful parishes and schools, and it was home to the provincial houses of many religious (especially teaching) orders. Most of those religious houses have closed, and those that remain have a dwindling number of sisters, many of whom are more heterodox than orthodox. Parishes are being shuttered, and in some cases, sold and turned into secular wedding venues. Much of this decay started long before you became archbishop, yet you are critical of an apostolate that is trying to rebuild what was once a mighty and robust archdiocese. One must ask, "why?"

I am a priest incarnated right across the Mississippi in the Diocese of Rockford. Sadly, Bishop Malloy has made it his mission to sideline priests who he deems to be too traditional and too orthodox. I am sure you are generally aware of the numbers of traditional priests who are canceled by some of your fellow bishops, but yet did you step forward to question a brother bishop who is your neighbor? Or do you follow the Nebraskan maxim, "not my pig, not my farm?" It is sad because Dubuque could certainly use faithful priests who are being canceled right across the river.

In conclusion, and with utmost humility, I respectfully request your Excellency to rescind your statement and to attend the fundraiser. Please be amongst your sheep who are crying out for a shepherd who smells like them. At the very least, please do invite Fr. Altman and me to sit down and break bread with you. I know that after listening to brother priests you will have a different opinion of Fr. Altman and canceled priests in general. Let us move forward, together, serving Christ and His bride our beloved Holy Mother Church. To that end, please know that the Coalition for Canceled Priests is praying for you and your intentions. May God Bless you!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. John P. Lovell

The Rev. John P. Lovell
Co-founder