



*Office of
the Bishop*

Catholic Pastoral Center
Diocese of El Paso

PRESS RELEASE

September 21, 2011

Father Michael Rodriguez has been re-assigned to a new parish in West Texas in response to the pastoral needs of the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso and its faithful. Fr. Rodriguez was formerly administrator of San Juan Bautista Church in El Paso.

Fr. Rodriguez has recently challenged certain City officials to participate with him in a partisan debate on issues related to an upcoming recall election. This type of intervention in the political process by religious organizations such as the Diocese of El Paso and San Juan Bautista Church is not permitted under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Fr. Rodriguez's proposed debate raised serious issues regarding whether his participation could be attributed to the Diocese of El Paso and San Juan Bautista Church.

The Catholic Church teaches values and a morality rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The voice of those who teach within the Church should be protected and remain strong in public civil life and discourse. However, the Catholic Church, and those who hold responsibility within the Church, cannot be involved in partisan efforts aimed at supporting or opposing candidates for political office or efforts to recall them.

Additionally, during the last 10 days, the Diocese of El Paso has received credible information and documents that show that Fr. Rodriguez failed to comply with Diocesan Policies that govern the administration of San Juan Bautista Church.

Fr. Rodriguez was the administrator of San Juan Bautista Parish and not its Pastor. Based on the policy violations established at this time and in response to the pastoral needs of the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso, Fr. Rodriguez has been reassigned.

Most Reverend Armando X. Ochoa
Bishop of El Paso