

only appeal to him, then to the Bishop, and then to Rome. Unless he had not obtained the necessary approval from the Diocesan authorities to spend the money, or the Diocesan authorities had themselves acted unlawfully, no judicial review would be possible. However if the parish priest simply went ahead without consulting anyone, he could be sued before the diocesan tribunal certainly by the Promoter of Justice, and possibly individual parishioners if they could establish a legal interest. If it was the Bishop, or an agent of his such as the Financial Secretary, who had acted unlawfully, then the case would have to be brought before the Rota. This is not, in the view of many Anglo-American canonists, a very happy state of affairs. I have no wish to see tribunals burdened with litigation of this kind, but at present there is a distinct hollowness to the claim of canon 221.1 "Christ's faithful may lawfully vindicate and defend the rights they enjoy in the Church, before the competent ecclesiastical forum in accordance with the law".

By way of conclusion, I must say that a description of the working of a tribunal has a distinct resemblance to Ezekiel's valley of the dry bones, before life was breathed into them! As a lived experience it is a great privilege to be allowed into intimate contact with the lives of so many people, and a source of great satisfaction to know that some at least one has been able to help resume a normal part in the life of the Church through the judicial process. There are many heartbreaking cases of disastrous but valid marriages, but there are also the letters of thanks, and even wedding photographs or pieces of cake that compensate to some extent.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEMBERS

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The Society's membership year ended on 30th June 1991, and the General Committee has determined that the annual subscription for 1991/1992 will be £15.00. Members should now send their cheques without further reminder to the Treasurer at the address below:

D. W. Faull, Esq.
Ecclesiastical Law Society
35 Great Peter Street
London SW1P 3LR

Cheques should be made payable to the Society and should have the member's name written on the back (unless it is printed on the front) with the word "Renewal". Please do not combine subscriptions with any other payment to the Society.