



March 24, 2010

His Eminence
Giovanni Battista Cardinal Re
Prefect, Congregation for Bishops
Piazzo Pio XII 10
00193 Rome, Italy

Dear Cardinal Re:

On behalf of Voice of the Faithful, I have written to the Holy Father and asked him to require the formal participation of lay men and women in Episcopal recommendation processes at archdiocesan and diocesan levels, preliminary to the Pope's appointment of new bishops. In support of this request, I enclosed a document entitled "Consulting the Laity on Candidates for the Episcopacy."

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Pope Benedict and the accompanying document. Upon reviewing them, I hope you will find that our request is constructive and merits serious consideration by the Holy See, particularly in this hour of crisis in the Church. The restoration of a substantive role for lay men and women in recommending candidates for the Episcopacy at this moment would be hailed by many Catholics and others as a critical step that may effectively counter the crisis over time.

Cardinal Re, may I ask you to support and foster this important request with the Holy Father? As Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, you are his close collaborator and advisor in the appointment of bishops throughout the world. In the enclosed document, you will note that the model we propose fully respects the existing procedures required by the Holy See in the preparation of a *ternus* for the appointment of a new bishop by the Pope. Our request would simply insert the formal participation of lay men and women in the Episcopal recommendations process held in their archdioceses and dioceses. In this way, the report of the Apostolic Nuncio, prepared on the basis of these local processes, would include observations of Catholic lay men and women. Thus, the recommendations of candidates forwarded to the Congregation for Bishops would enjoy a breadth of background information that could more wisely inform the Congregation's deliberations in preparing its recommendations for the Pope.

Be assured that Voice of the Faithful presents this request to the Pope prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to guide him and his associates in the Holy See in their careful consideration of this noble cause.

Sincerely in Christ,

Daniel Bartley, President