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Church Militant, the far-right Catholic media network, will cease operating at the end of April, according to a press release issued March 1 by the law firm Todd & Weld LLP.

The law firm announced that Church Militant, operated by St. Michael's Media, had lost a defamation lawsuit to the Rev. Georges de Laire, a canon lawyer and priest in the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire. Church Militant agreed to pay $500,000 and apologize to de Laire, said the law firm, which represented de Laire.

On Jan. 17, 2019, Church Militant published an anonymously written story titled, "NH Vicar Changes Dogma Into Heresy," about de Laire. After de Laire sued the outlet for defamation, the author of the article was revealed to be Marc Balestrieri, a canon lawyer who was representing a client in a dispute where de Laire was representing the diocese of Manchester.

In that dispute, the Diocese of Manchester had accused the Saint Benedict Center in Richmond, New Hampshire, of violating canon law, according to Todd & Weld. The Saint Benedict Center and its members, who call themselves, Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, had promoted the position held by their founder, a Jesuit priest named Leonard Feeney, that salvation is only possible through the Catholic Church.

Feeney, who died in 1978, was excommunicated for this view, though he was later reconciled to the church.

The Southern Poverty Law Center also added the center to a list of hate groups in 2007 for its members' antisemitic beliefs.

In 2019, the Diocese of Manchester forbade Catholics from participating in activities with the center and the center from calling itself Catholic because they said that they had warned the group that their position is contrary to Vatican teaching.

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The law firm alleges that Balestrieri used his article to "discredit Father de Laire and the Diocese and to raise funds," some of which would go to pay for Balestrieri's legal work.

After he was sued for defamation, Balestrieri did not appear to defend himself nor did he appear for a deposition, according to both Church Militant and Todd & Weld.

For his article, Balestrieri claimed to have talked with anonymous sources who allegedly made negative personal and professional comments about de Laire, but Church Militant and Balestrieri never identified any sources who said anything negative about de Laire.

"SMM and Church Militant regret that the article was not properly vetted," the outlet's apology says, using an acronym for St. Michael's Media.

"SMM sincerely apologizes for their part in any distress or damage they may have caused Father de Laire," they wrote.

On Feb. 24, The Washington Post reported that Church Militant leader Michael Voris' resignation in November came after his habit of sending shirtless photos of himself to staff and a donor led to those photos appearing on the outlet's cloud-storage account.

Voris had previously publicly repented for his relationships with men, even as he led prominent anti-LGBTQ+ campaigns and mudslinging.

While Church Militant reported $79,248 in net assets in their tax filing for the fiscal year ending in December of 2022, St. Michaels Media disclosed $2,699,449 in net assets for the same period.

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Also on March 1, the city of Baltimore agreed to pay Church Militant $275,000 in a settlement in Church Militant's lawsuit over the city's attempts to cancel a 2021 rally outside the U.S. bishops conference.

The city said they attempted to block the rally because "of a legitimate fear that it would incite violence" because far-right provocateurs Steve Bannon and Milo Yiannopoulos were planned speakers and the event might draw counter-protesters.

While Baltimore "vehemently objects to the group's message of hate, given the court's initial decision, the city feels the best course of action is to settle this matter now to mitigate further exposure were the matter to proceed to trial," the Baltimore

City Law Department wrote in a Feb. 29 statement.