

Guiding Principles

We have been asked to recommend a plan -- by February 2021 – to reduce the number church facilities in Auburn and northern Cayuga County in such a way that optimizes the strength of today’s Catholic community and preserves the opportunity for future generations of Catholics to practice their faith in a vibrant, sustainable parish community.

Our deliberations will be guided by the following principles:

1. We acknowledge and are thankful the Auburn Catholic community has not yet had to undertake the significant consolidation of church facilities that other communities in the Diocese have had to endure.
2. We recognize there are many conflating issues that confront us: e.g. demographics, societal trends, priest shortages, weak economy, aging population, diminishing resources, etc. One certain opportunity to improve the long term sustainability of the Catholic community is to optimize the amount of real estate owned by the Catholic Church. This shall be the focus of our work.
3. We value and deeply respect the wonderful traditions and uniqueness of each church and parish in our community.
4. We acknowledge any closing of church facilities will be both sad and difficult. However, we also recognize there is no viable, sustainable manner to maintain the current number of unutilized or underutilized facilities.
5. We will prayerfully consider all input and appreciate the prayers of our fellow parishioners.
6. We believe any church closure plan should be implemented in as expeditious manner as possible, to limit the period of disruption and uncertainty. Diminishing financial and pastoral resources only compound the need for expediency.
7. We believe our faith calls us to accept that any Catholic church is “home” and a place to celebrate the Eucharist.
8. We believe a faith community can be smaller, yet still strong; we dedicate ourselves to recommending a plan that best enables this opportunity.
9. In addition to recommending a plan that best provides for Catholics to gather, worship and celebrate the Eucharist, we will put forth recommendations to retain facilities that provide for the other needs of a vibrant faith community (social gatherings, pastoral housing, kitchen facilities, administrative offices, food pantries, faith formation, etc.)
10. Any church facility that is closed and disposed of should be done so in a manner that protects and preserves all religious artifacts and relics.
11. We will communicate regularly and openly regarding our deliberations with parishioners of Auburn and Northern Cayuga County.
12. We will rely on the support and guidance of Frs. Lioi and Gathenya.