



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

1150 Buffalo Road
Rochester, New York 14624
(585) 328-3210

*August 11, 2021
Memorial of Saint Clare*

Dear Father Lioi, Dear Father Karani:

I write to you once again concerning the present parochial situations in Auburn and Northern Cayuga County and the pastoral planning that continues to occur to assure a vibrant Catholic presence in this area of our Diocese.

Following upon the receipt of the recommendations of the Planning Committee for the restructuring and pastoral assessment of parishes in Auburn and Northern Cayuga County; and having reviewed this matter at the meetings of the Diocesan Presbyteral Council on June 23, 2021, and August 10, 2021, in accordance with canon 515, §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, which requires that I hear the Diocesan Presbyteral Council on this matter, at which meetings the College of Consultors and the Deans were in attendance to offer additional counsel; and having attended listening sessions that were held in Auburn on Tuesday, July 13th and Thursday, July 15th, 2021, I now write to inform you of my decision.

Having given this subject extensive and prayerful consideration and having pondered seriously the material presented both written and orally from the many consulted, I hereby direct that in the next year by September 1, 2022, the parishes present their concrete efforts made to divest themselves of unnecessary properties and to utilize only those facilities needed to serve the religious, pastoral and spiritual needs of the faithful. The Report of the Planning Committee should serve as a guide and a stimulus in the decisions reached. While no mandate at this time is given to close any church, they ought to be included in the assessment. Also, there is no need to postpone until September 1, 2022, the proposal for the sale of properties already under consideration.

Since May 2, 2017, I have described areas for consideration and which have only grown more pressing in formulating a plan. Such a plan must also acknowledge what is feasible with three or even two priests assigned to this area of our Diocese as we anticipate the ministerial needs and clergy resources for the entire twelve counties.

The Very Reverend Father Frank E. Lioi
Saint Mary's Church
15 Clark Street
Auburn, New York 13021

The Reverend Father Stephen N. Karani
Holy Family Church
85 North Street
Auburn, New York 13021

The Very Reverend Father Frank E. Lioi
The Reverend Father Stephen N. Karani
August 11, 2021
Page two

Referring to my May 2, 2017 letter, I now reiterate the following areas for review:

- Assess ministry needs for the Auburn and Northern Cayuga area; identify areas of ministry for collaboration among some or all of the parishes; and determine ministry priorities with due regard for clergy availability into the future and potential future clustering. Beyond the parishes, please consider ministry needs for the Auburn Correctional Facility, The Commons on St. Anthony, Auburn Community Hospital, and Cayuga Community College.
- Assess administrative needs for the parishes and combine whenever possible.
- Consider seriously the re-alignment of staffing and ministries (including faith formation, youth ministry, and visitation of the homebound, as was accomplished with the shared finance/business office) to meet ministerial and administrative needs while using parish financial resources most responsibly.
- Given your identified ministry priorities and ministerial staffing, determine the types and availability of volunteer leadership and the corresponding training that will be needed.
- Assess current building usage and projected capital repairs, and develop a long-term plan for building usage or sale.
- With the closing of St. Joseph School, what financial resources are needed for evangelization and religious education?

By March 1, 2022, after consultation with your parish leadership, I ask that you present to the Diocesan Office for Pastoral Planning what steps have been taken in answer to the above direction and what are the goals to be reached by September 1, 2022. Naturally, these initiatives must be conducted in consultation with the Pastoral and Finance Councils of the Parishes in cooperation with our diocesan offices.

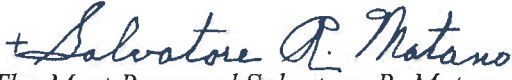
The work of the Planning Committee should not have been done in vain and the Committee certainly identified the basic premise upon which this process is built, namely noting the demographics, the financial circumstances, the building footprints, the sacramental records for the administration of the Sacraments, which all indicate that steps must be taken now if we are to be good stewards of our resources and realistically provide for the strong continuation of the faith in this much appreciated area of our Diocese.

The Very Reverend Father Frank E. Lioi
The Reverend Father Stephen N. Karani
August 11, 2021
Page three

In closing, I repeat my words in my July 16, 2021 letter to you: "I also am grateful for the number of people who came to these meetings which evidenced significant participation among the faithful regarding this initiative. Many presenters expressed their concerns respectfully and with genuine love for their particular parishes. On the other hand, some have preconceived opinions and I regret that my words may not have been well accepted by these persons. This only illustrates that on our parts we must do more to communicate the reality of the situation, well known to you, and work together to create a cooperative and collaborative dialogue grounded in charity and in truth." Once again, our offices stand ready to assist you.

Renewing my gratitude to you and to the faithful entrusted to your pastoral care, I remain, with an assurance of my prayers,

Sincerely yours in Christ,


The Most Reverend Salvatore R. Matano
Bishop of Rochester

cc: The Very Reverend Father Paul J. Tomasso, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia
The Reverend Father Michael R. Brown, Parochial Vicar, Holy Family, Sacred Heart and Saint Alphonsus Parishes, Auburn
The Reverend Father Joseph P. Maurici, III, Parochial Vicar, Saint Mary Parish, Auburn, Saints Mary and Martha Parish, Auburn, and Our Lady of the Snow Parish, Weedsport
Mr. Daniel J. Fessenden, Chair, Planning Committee
Mr. Bernard Grizard, Director, Office of Pastoral Services
Dr. Shannon Kilbridge, Office of Pastoral Services
Ms. Lisa M. Passero, Chief Financial Officer
The Reverend Father Daniel J. Condon, Chancellor