

Orleans Niagara East Catholic Community
Holy Family – Holy Trinity – Our Lady of the Lake – St. Mark – St. Mary

Diocesan Recommendations for the ONE Catholic Community

Friends, this evening, Monday, June 10, all ten of our Parish Trustees and I attended a meeting for all clergy and Trustees from Orleans and Niagara Counties. The purpose of this meeting was to receive the recommendations of the Diocesan Road to Renewal Office for each Family of Parishes in the Niagara Orleans Vicariate. These recommendations come as part of a convergence of the Road to Renewal effort to right-size the setup of our Diocesan infrastructure with the reorganization we have been told is a necessary part of the present Chapter 11 Bankruptcy.

The recommendations the Diocese provided for ONE Catholic are as follows:

- Close the St. Stephen's worship site in Middleport, which is the secondary site of Holy Trinity Parish, Medina/Middleport.
- Sale of the entire St. Stephen's worship site property.
- St. Mark's in Kendall is recommended to merge with St. Mary's in Holley.
- Sale of the entire St. Mark's property.
- St. Rocco Festival Grounds in Hulberton is recommended to be sold.
- Property and rectory in Lyndonville are recommended to be sold.
- It is recommended that Our Lady of the Lake Parish move from Family #11 to Family #10 and merge with St. John the Baptist in Lockport with use as a secondary site.

The rationale the Diocese provided for these decisions is as follows:

- These recommendations were made with feedback from the Pastor of the Family.
- With the number of projected priests, these recommendations are strategic to help make sure there is a Catholic presence within a reasonable mileage for this Family.
- Excess property would be off loaded so as not to be a burden to the Family moving forward.
- The move of Our Lady of the Lake to Family #10 is because of geographical considerations of parish site locations and priestly staffing that is expected by the year 2030. The merge with St. John the Baptist is to reduce administration for the priestly leadership.
- The recommendation to move parishes between families was because of consultation with the Vicar Forane and his conversations with priests in this area. This will need to be discussed further for a timeline for this to happen.

Now having received these recommendations, the Diocese has given us until July 15 to either accept these recommendations or present an alternate proposal. Our Administration Pillar, Trustees, and other ONE Catholic leaders will be working closely with me to determine our response to the recommendations. The Diocese plans to announce its decisions at the beginning of September.

As part of this process, I invite all ONE Catholic Parishioners to attend an information and discussion meeting. There will be one meeting at each of our six worship sites. Please feel free to join us at any of the six sessions, regardless of where you ordinarily attend Mass. The purpose and flow of these meetings will be the same at each location. The meetings will be held as follows:

- Wednesday, June 19 at 6:30 PM - St. Mary's, Holley
- Thursday, June 20 at 9:30 AM - Holy Trinity, St. Stephen's, Middleport
- Thursday, June 20 at 6:30 PM - Holy Family, Albion
- Friday, June 21 at 6:00 PM - Holy Trinity, St. Mary's, Medina
- Saturday, June 22 at 9:00 AM - Our Lady of the Lake, Barker
- Saturday, June 22 at 6:30 PM - St. Mark's, Kendall

The purpose of these gatherings will be to share our perspectives about our Family of Parishes, the recommendations the Diocese has provided, and our hopes of continuing to grow and foster our wonderful mission here at ONE Catholic. Let's continue to pray for one another and for all those who are in special need.

God bless you,

Fr. Mark Noonan