



WILLIAM T. MCGRATTAN

BISHOP *of* CALGARY

February 14, 2023

Rev. Kevin Tumback
Pastor
All Saints Parish
2405 – 12 Avenue South
Lethbridge, Alberta
T1K 0P4

Dear Fr. Kevin

Thank you for the opportunity to address the parishioners who attended the Parish Pastoral Advisory Council meeting on January 18 at Our Lady of Assumption. I am truly appreciative of the approximately 90 parishioners who attended, and I am grateful for their feedback and respectful of the sentiments they expressed.

I also acknowledge that there was a lot of information to absorb at our brief meeting, and I am hopeful that the slides of the presentation now posted on the All Saints website will be helpful to allow for further discernment and reflection on those messages.

This letter provides me with another opportunity to restate the key points that I made in that presentation.

Fundamentally, we need to take concrete action now to move forward to address the current and future needs of the parish in East Lethbridge, and to begin to heal the longstanding divisions within the parish. Our overall focus must remain on discerning those needs and identifying reasonable options to address them.

The formal parish assessment project will begin to generate options which you will send to me as your recommendations by December 31, 2023 on the possible paths forwards – all options are open for consideration.

Two decades have passed since we first attempted to discern the future pastoral needs of the parish in East Lethbridge. As part of this new assessment project, we will need to refresh our data to ensure we are basing the recommendations and decisions on the best information and statistics currently available.

To ensure stronger coordination and communication, the Diocese is providing funding for an external process coach to work with the Parish Project Team to ensure the process is open, well researched and documented, and is completed in a timely and efficient manner.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CALGARY

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In addition to launching the East Lethbridge Catholic Parish Assessment Project (ELCPAP) at the Parish Pastoral Council meeting on January 18, the decision of the Apostolic Signatura with respect to the closure of St. Patrick's church was shared with the parishioners who were present. The Signatura overturned the closure decree, citing a process error on the part of the diocese and the decision of the lower court (Congregation for Clergy). With this ruling, the decision was then directed back to the Congregation for Clergy to provide guidance to the Diocese. The canonical guidance was that St. Patrick's church building be open for celebrating the Holy Eucharist twice per year (on March 17 and September 24), and must be open for prayer at least on occasion.

The Church Reopening Committee has now been launched to implement the safe reopening of St. Patrick's church as directed. I want to acknowledge and thank you, Fr Kevin, for having the foresight to keep St Patrick's heated during this period of closure and for conducting regular safety checks of the building. I understand that while there are still a few hurdles to overcome, we are much better positioned for a timely and safe reopening of the church building within reasonable costs.

I wish to confirm that an invitation was extended to SOCA leadership to join both the Parish Assessment Project Team and the Church Reopening Committee, but unfortunately, I have received a formal letter from the SOCA leadership declining their participation. While I lament that decision, we must proceed on both projects without the benefit of their input. At the same time, we will reserve a place for them in the hopes that SOCA might reconsider joining these parish efforts at some point in the future.

In closing, I would invite any parishioner interested in either of these projects to reach out to you to express their desire to achieve the mandate as outlined and offer their expertise. Finally, in the spirit of neutrality and transparency, my guidance to you and all participants on these committees will be posted on the parish website in a document entitled "Bishop's Expectations".

I pray for the success and work of both committees, and look forward to receiving the Parish Project Committee's recommendations by the end of the year.

Sincerely yours in Christ



✠William T. McGrattan
Bishop of Calgary