

# ELCPAP

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## Communications Update

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### Chapter One

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April 18, 2023

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On January 18, 2023, Bishop William T. McGrattan publicly announced the East Lethbridge Catholic Parish Assessment Project that will culminate with local recommendations to him in January 2024. In the spirit of transparency and staying connected, this is the first in a series of regular Chapter updates to keep you informed of the status of the project and explain how current activities are related to the overall project.

#### **Project Background**

It has been more than two decades since decisions were made about the best path forward for the East Lethbridge parish. Parish needs have since evolved due to:

- Changing demographics of parishioners
- Escalating maintenance costs for current church buildings
- Inadequate parking, access to some buildings, and security concerns
- Insufficient space for pastoral education programs and religious formation

To address these changing needs, Bishop William T. McGrattan of the Calgary Diocese initiated the East Lethbridge Catholic Parish Assessment Project (ELCPAP) in September, 2022. The mandate of the local Project Team is to research and recommend a Parish Assessment strategy and implementation plan based on realistic options, priorities, and evaluation criteria. The objective is to collect stakeholder ideas to shape the future of All Saints Parish and to provide dedicated church space to address pastoral needs. As Bishop McGrattan declared at the January 18 public launch of the project, “all options are open”.

There are five key messages that the Bishop wishes to emphasize for the project:

- As Church we are called to be united in the witness of our faith, to be one in Christ, one family of God
- We follow Christ with humility, allowing our prayer and reflection to guide decisions and actions for any needed reconciliation which promote the unity and mission of the Church.
- We need to focus on the assessment of those current and future pastoral needs of East Lethbridge which will ensure the long-term vibrancy and resiliency of All Saints Parish

- We will employ a comprehensive consultative process to assess, discern and recommend options to the Bishop to ensure dedicated church building space to serve the future pastoral needs of the East Lethbridge Parish
- We will act upon the Signatura decision to re-open St. Patrick's Church based on the guidance from the Congregation for the Clergy so that Mass would be celebrated at least twice per year as well as being open at least on occasion for private prayer.

### **St. Patrick's Church Update**

St. Patrick's Church was reopened for private prayer and viewing on March 16, 2023 with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. 184 people entered the church, many of whom were parishioners while many others were curious from a decade of controversy to see the edifice. The atmosphere was very peaceful and people maintained a reverent silence while inside.

On the feast of St. Patrick, March 17, Mass was celebrated at 7:00 pm with around 600 people of mixed demographics in attendance. The atmosphere was joyful and people were happy to be there for that event.

Both the above events were well communicated in advance on the All Saints website, in the Parish Bulletin, and announced at Mass.

A decision on the frequency which St. Patrick's will be open for private prayer is close, subject to resolving security concerns. A schedule will be published on the website and in the Bulletin once that decision has been made.

### **Current Activities**

Since January 18, the Parish Assessment Team (PAT) has been formed, and we are truly grateful for the volunteers that have stepped forward. A project kick off and training session was held on February 25 for prospective team members. The PAT will help guide the activities of the four main subcommittees that will do the bulk of the work.

The first committee up to bat is called the Option Generation (OG) Committee and Dorothy Boras has kindly agreed act as chair. Over the early spring, that team is tasked with designing a one page input sheet that can be filled in electronically or manually. Next, that team will use that tool to fan out across a spectrum of stakeholder groups to ask their ideas to help shape the future of the parish. Stakeholders are being identified now but for example will include you, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League, other area parishes, etc. Stakeholders will be invited to submit a one page sheet, and all that data will be collected.

### **Next Steps**

Following the busy Easter season, you can expect to receive an invitation in May to submit your ideas for Options and I urge you to do so when asked. The subcommittee that is next up to bat is the Data and Needs Analysis Committee and more information will be provided on their role and activities in the next Chapter update.

If you have any questions, or would like more information on the project, please ask me directly, or refer to the website including the Bishop's January 18, 2023 PowerPoint.

Father Kevin