

September 26, 2023

## **Our Mother of Sorrows Parish**

### **Parish Response and Recommendations on the preliminary plan for parishes in Erie County**

Members of Our Mother of Sorrows Pastoral and Finance Committees met on Sunday, 9/24/2023, at Noon to draft these recommendations regarding the Diocesan Preliminary Plan proposed on 8/29/2023.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

By *unanimous decision*, we request and recommend that *St. Ann Church* be designated a *Secondary Mission Church* of St. Stanislaus Parish and St. Casimir and Holy Family become Secondary Churches. As a Secondary Mission Church, St. Ann would have Sunday Masses as well as Holy Day Masses and Daily Masses with St. Casimir and Holy Family available for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, Feast Day Masses, etc.

#### **REASONS:**

- \*This proposal would eliminate a ‘spiritual desert’ by allowing mass/Catholic presence in this neighborhood.
- \*It will retain parishioners here who would otherwise not attend mass elsewhere (as indicated at our Town Hall Meeting held on 9/17/2023)
- \*St. Ann’s currently offers;
  - Daily Mass Mon. through Fri., followed by praying the rosary
  - Hosts Legion of Mary Retreats
  - Hosts World Apostolate of Fatima Diocesan Retreat
  - Knights of Columbus Meetings
  - Divine Mercy Sunday Mass
  - Annual Novena to Good St. Ann as well as other spiritual activities
  - Dr. Gertrude A. Barber's spiritual life and vocation to serving adults and children with special needs began, continued, and was fostered throughout her lifetime by her devout faith and reception of the sacraments at St. Ann's Church. Her cause for Beatification and Canonization has been formally introduced on behalf of the Diocese of Erie. She is currently recognized by the Universal Church as a Servant of God and St. Ann's Church remains an important part of her spiritual history and spiritual works.
  - St. Ann's Church has the longest history of serving the people of God in this neighborhood area as the first canonically recognized, erected, and dedicated Catholic church and parish located in this lower Eastside neighborhood of the City of Erie.

\*We have a Priest in Residence, Fr. Jerry Priscaro, who is available to provide on-going sacramental ministry to the people, which he has done since 2007. It should be noted that, at our Town Hall Meeting, his continuing spiritual guidance was requested and overwhelmingly supported by our parishioners. Active Lay Ministries are also offered to support Fr. Jerry. His availability will prove to be conducive to St. Ann’s Secondary Mission Status.

\*This plan would restore hope, revitalize the spirituality of the people of the lower east side of Erie and will make Catholic Sacraments readily available to them. The consensus received from our Town Hall was that Our Mother of Sorrows has endured unique, disproportional, and painful changes through previous Pastoral Planning which has had a severe, negative impact.

\*The City of Erie continues with plans to revitalize the East Avenue corridor and the lower east side of Erie and St. Ann's Secondary Mission Church Status would accomplish all of the above.

\*It was recognized that in other Diocesan Preliminary Plan proposals for other churches, 2 churches were designated as Secondary Mission Churches of a Stand-Alone Parish.

We also make the request for representation from Our Mother of Sorrows Parish to be incorporated into the St. Stan's Pastoral Council and their Finance Council.

In conclusion, we believe these recommendations and proposals are in the best interest of the spiritual welfare of our parishioners and our neighborhood. Thank you for your thoughtful and prayerful consideration of our recommendations and requests.

Sincerely in Christ,

**Finance Council:** David Dombkowski, Rod Showers, Lisa Walters

**Pastoral Council:** Mike Kuzma, Bob Merski, Bob Mazur, Karen Mazur, Matt Visosky

**Special Advisor:** Father Jerry Priscaro