

Dear Fellow Catholics,

The Diocese of Cleveland is in the process of unnecessarily and abusively closing parishes that are vibrant, solvent, thriving, and serving.

The two year clustering/closing process, which has been a major affront to the good people of Northeast Ohio, has NEVER asked how we could work to help each other. Rather, the mandate was to "cluster" and throw each other under the bus or toss each other from the lifeboat.

We ask you our fellow Catholics, Is this the Church we have known and supported and cherished? We think not.

We object to the closings of our beloved Parishes without consent of the Parishioners; people like you who have sacrificed you time and treasure to make St. Barbara a warm welcoming place to worship Almighty God.

We are Endangered Catholics, established in April of this year, working to reverse the closings of our parishes, and asking for the second chance accorded to St. Ignatius and St. Colman Parishes. We are a group reaching out in good faith to our brothers and sisters like yourselves for support.

We ask the members of your parish to listen to our stories. We ask you to inform yourselves regarding actions taken in this Diocese that have adversely affected your fellow brothers and sisters from smaller parishes primarily in the inner city.

Our hope is that at the end of the process all Cleveland Diocese members will be able to say "We stood up and helped our fellow Catholics." You have the power to do so because you parish is not in any danger at this time. It would be a tragedy indeed if any Cleveland Diocese members, at the end of this horrendous process said, "We didn't know."

We have enclosed a fact sheet which gives information about the coalition and each of the 13 parishes that have joined together. Perhaps you were a member of one of these Parishes. Perhaps you have relatives that were married or buried in one of them. Whatever the case, we look to you for your support. We have included our mission statement and a copy of an article detailing a peaceful and progressive approach to reconfiguration.

Perhaps you would like a representative to come speak at your Parish. We would be happy to come and explain the Endangered Catholics group and our mission to reverse the unjust closings of Parishes. We also ask you, our fellow Catholics to express your concerns to Bishop Lennon.

Bishop Lennon instituted the clustering/merging/closing process while he served in Boston, Auxiliary Bishop Robert Hennessy said of the process, "It has been an

unmitigated disaster which should never be repeated." Sadly, that unmitigated disaster is being visited on our Diocese with much the same results as in Boston.

We ask you to please make your voices heard. Your parish could be next. We never dreamed such a horrendous fate would be awaiting our beloved Catholic Church.

Please come and join us on Wednesdays from 4-6 p.m. as we peacefully protest the unjust closures of our Parishes at East Ninth and Superior Avenue.

If you would like to attend our meetings and get to know the Parishes slated for closure Please contact Nancy McGrath at (330) 867-7554 for more information.: Email address is nsmcgrath@earthlink.net

Thank you kindly for your help in saving our churches

How can you help us?

We meet every other Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at one of our sister parishes that is slated for closure. Call Mike at (216) 398-7352 for the next meeting info.

Please come and demonstrate on the third Wednesday of the month from 4-6 p.m. at St. John Cathedral. We are gaining momentum as new people come and voice their support. We encourage you, our faithful of St. Barbara to especially come on the third Wednesday of each month. We also demonstrate every Wednesday if you wish to take part!

God bless you and thank you for your support!

ENDANGERED CATHOLICS -- Fact Sheet

Organization -- Endangered Catholics is an organization of 13 Parishes working together to keep our Parishes open. The group objects to Bishop Richard Lennon's mandates for closing and requests that Bishop Lennon extend to our Parishes the same reversal and second chance accorded St. Ignatius and St. Colman.

Solvent and Vibrant -- The 13 Parishes are all solvent, vibrant, striving, thriving, serving, joyful communities.

Size -- The Parishes range in size from 250 families to 1500 families. Facilities and Properties -- Most facilities and properties are in excellent condition, well maintained and lovingly cared for. One church needs a new roof, monies have been pledged.

Debt and Savings -- Most parishes are debt free. Two owe back assessments to the Diocese. Many have savings. Money in the bank ranges from \$600,000 to \$2.3 Million. Total savings among the Parishes is over \$7 Million.

Countering Bishop Lennon's Reasons for Mandating Closings: Bishop Lennon claims churches must be closed because of changing demographics, priest shortage, and financial problems. We point out: Reverse Migration - from Suburbs to City -- Around 50% of the parishioners belonging to these 13 Parishes come into the city from the suburbs. This is reverse migration for Mass, services, education and social action programs.

Sharing Is the Answer to Priest Shortage -- Endangered Catholics recommends Pastoral Units, approved by Canon Law, which cluster to share priests for Mass and Eucharist. (Two Parishes of the 13 are served by priests from outside the Diocese- another option.)

Financial Problems Are in the Diocese, Not the Parishes -- These Parishes do not have financial problems. We believe we are being closed because the Diocese has financial problems. We believe the Diocese will capture the \$7 Million. We believe the Diocese has earmarked these churches and parishes for sale because they are prime properties easily sold in deals already in process by the Diocese.

Serving Christ's Mission to the Poor - Closing these Parishes will end major services and outreach to the poor and disadvantaged. (See attached list)

Ethnic and African American Parishes Particularly Abused in Mandates --St. Adalbert with a focus on African American religious services, St. Emeric and St. Margaret of Hungary with focus on Hungarian Mass and services, St. Barbara with focus on Polish Mass and services -- all are being devastated by Diocesan mandates. Cleveland was built on the sweat and labor of ethnics and African Americans. That history is being torn asunder.

Glorious Architecture To Be Destroyed -- Cleveland, the City of Beautiful Churches, is about to lose a trove of treasures.

We Ask our Fellow Citizens -- Please Support Endangered Catholics Save Our Churches! Save Our City! Contact: Nancy S. McGrath 330 867 7554 nsmcgrath@earthlink.net

How can you help? Come on the third Wednesday of the month from 4-6 p.m. at St. John Cathedral to peacefully demonstrate. We need your support!