



DIOCESE OF BUFFALO
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 1, 2024

Dear Catholic Faithful throughout Western New York:

This past Wednesday marked the fourth anniversary of Diocese of Buffalo's filing for Chapter 11 Reorganization. This filing, as you know, was the result of a significant number of cases filed under the Child Victim Act. The bankruptcy and reorganization process has gone on longer than anyone anticipated or desired. The Diocese and its attorneys have worked consistently to pursue a reasonable, fair, and equitable resolution to compensate the victims of sexual abuse, to bring them healing, and to ensure that the work and ministry of the Church throughout Western New York continues.

It is imperative that we come to a successful resolution of the Chapter 11 case as soon as possible. In order to accomplish this, we all must continue to work together as the Catholic Family of Western New York. This will require faith, sacrifice, and a reshaping of the Church throughout our Diocese. This also means that the current liquid financial assets and real estate resources of the Diocese and its parishes are reviewed, appraised, and evaluated for possible inclusion in the funds used to create the Victims Compensation Trust. Also included in this Trust will be funds from insurance coverage.

Recently, the Diocese was required to submit a listing of properties it owns to the US Chapter 11 court. This listing is not a listing of properties that will be sold. The only properties that are currently being marketed are the Catholic Center on Main Street, Buffalo State Newman Center, both in Buffalo and Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora. Others may be considered as well.

In reshaping our diocese for the future, other parishes may close and additional properties sold. The Diocese will communicate those decisions in light of appropriate consultation. These moments of reorganization can result in changes that are painful in the short term, but are meant to help us bear fruit and more faith enriching experiences in the long term. The reality is that in the near future, buildings may close but the Church, the people of God, will continue. The renewal will provide us a way to move forward in hope!

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael W. Fisher
Bishop of Buffalo