



Our Lady of Czestochowa • Saint Amelia
Saint Christopher • Saint Francis • Saint Jude

Dear Parishioners of the Roman Catholic Community of the Tonawandas-

On Monday September 9, 2024, a diocesan wide meeting was held, with clergy and lay leaders from parishes across the diocese gathering in each vicariate to discuss the Road to Renewal. At the meeting it was announced that in our Family of Parishes, St. Francis of Assisi will officially close and merge with Our Lady of Czestochowa and St. Jude the Apostle will close and merge with St. Christopher.

For the communities of St. Francis and St. Jude, this is now the third time you have heard this announced and it only hurts more each time. It was my hope that when the announcement was final, that we would be able to announce it only at the parishes impacted, by the priests of our Family, not through social media. However, the diocese poorly decided to make the announcement on a Monday evening and so I wanted to communicate with you as quickly as possible before the media reveals anything.

As we move forward, a transition team will be formed for both St. Francis and St. Jude to help work through decisions moving forward. **There is no date yet set for either parish to have their final Mass or for anything to close.** Everything will be communicated through bulletins moving forward throughout the process. Transition teams will begin meeting this month.

These decisions are not easy, and as stated before, not something any of want to go through. However, when we look at the priest shortage, Mass attendance decline, and growing financial challenges in some situations, we are left with no other choice. Be assured of my prayers as we move forward and let us continue to pray for the Church, and remember that our faith in Christ will see us through.

In Good Faith, ~Fr. Michael