

January 25, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It has been two months now since the Bishop named me pastor of St. Michael's. That's two months since the beginning of a new church year with Advent. And it was the weekend before Advent when Deacon Paul and I listened to the concerns and questions regarding the future of the parish. During that time, we have met with Deacon Andy Grebe, the parish trustees, and the members of the parish finance council, who have been working selflessly in the interest of St. Michael's.

Two months ago I had promised at least two things. *First*: that St. Michael's Parish is here to stay. It shall *not* close. Our status as an independent parish is assured. *Second*: there will be transparency regarding the financial standing of the Parish with its people; its stakeholders.

In keeping with transparency, I am inviting all parishioners to join Deacon Paul and me at a "Parish Town Hall Meeting" on Thursday, February 4, at 6:30pm in the Church. We are holding it in the Church proper so that we can live-stream the meeting for those unable to attend while COVID persists. Thankfully, we can do this because of a grant we won from the Diocese to invest in this technology worth close to \$10,000.

Spoiler alert!!! The good news is that the parish's finances are on solid footing, thanks to your generous commitment to the future of St. Michael's. But we will discuss measures to safeguard your investment in our future together. And we will share the data on exactly where we stand, and what we need to function and thrive as Church here on the Island.

We are in this together! While I may be the chief steward of the goods of this parish, there is no parish without you, the greatest goods of the church. And as such, you are my fellow stewards who deserve to know where we stand and where we are headed as Catholics responsible to the thriving of Christ's community and mission here at St. Michael's.

I very much look forward to seeing and hearing from you at this "town-hall" style meeting -- a *family* meeting -- maybe not around the kitchen table -- but before the table of the True Bread from Heaven, the Altar of Perfect Sacrifice, *Christ's* table, on the corner of Ontario St. & Page Ave., in communion with the Bishop of Albany, in communion with *all* the bishops and their flocks, in communion with Holy Mother Church, shepherded by the Servant of the Servants of God, the Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Christ.

Your humble servant,

Fr. John Cronin

Pastor, St. Michael's Parish, Cohoes