

Office of the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary

May 25, 2014

Mr. Don Demers
2913 - 31st Avenue South
Lethbridge, AB T1K 6S6

Dear Don

On May 23rd, I received two letters from Lethbridge - yours, supposedly representing a group, albeit a small one, within the larger parish community, which wasn't co-signed by the Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson or the Pastor. The other letter was from the Lethbridge Catholic Young Adults, six pages in length, and signed by the seven person leadership executive). They are amazing different in tone and vision.

The Young Adults letter was positive, appreciative, gracious, forward-looking, open to change, faith filled, Catholic, wide expansive vision, and concerned about building community. Your letter, by contrast, tended to be negative, complaint-laden, patronizing, backward looking, closed, resentful, narrow-minded, manifesting a tunnel vision, and concerned about preserving a building.

If you were in my shoes, where would you judge the Spirit to be?

Beginning with terminology, "the ostensible reason," indicates that you really haven't yet grasped the content of the "shuttering letter" (copy attached). Please re-read the letter and don't just react to the word "columbarium." Finally, I want to call your attention in particular to the following paragraph.

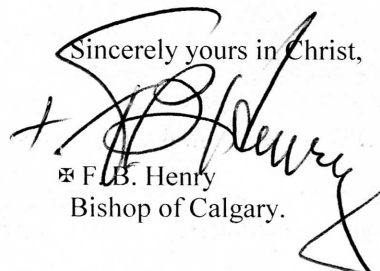
"I sincerely hope that this closure will be temporary but it will continue until a funding program has begun that will ensure that the future financial viability of St. Patrick's is secure. Such a plan must be one that places no undue burden on All Saints Parish over the long term and must be acceptable to the Diocesan Planning Commission, the Diocesan Finance Council, and the Diocesan Consultors."

The big plan was, and still is, to build a new All Saints Church. As for St. Patrick's, after patiently waiting for 1000 days, no plans has been submitted. What I had hoped would a temporary closure, **you and your group** (emphasized added), nevertheless, have decided should be permanent.

It is sadly ironic that in Medicine Hat we were faced with a situation not all that dissimilar to Lethbridge. We closed St. Paul's Chapel, closed and sold Christ the King Church and St. Mary's Church and built Holy Family Church. They will in all likelihood pay off their church mortgage by the end of the year. Different attitude, different outcome.

Wishing you all the best, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



✠ F. B. Henry
Bishop of Calgary.

cc V. Rev. K. Tumback, VF

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