



## “SAVE OUR CHURCHES” ASSOCIATION

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### UPDATE FOR JANUARY 3, 2019

Day 2,713 of the Closure    7 years 5 months and 3 days

Dear SOCA members and friends,

I hope that you had a joyful and blessed Christmas. Sadly one of our members, Eira Arisman died on December 27 at the age of 87 years. May she rest in peace. I send our warm condolences to her husband of 65 years, Steve Arisman and his family. While I wish all members happiness, peace and good health in the year ahead, I am aware that several members face health issue, some of a serious nature, so I ask for your prayers on their behalf. The last seven years have taken their toll of many good members of SOCA and our parish, a reality we continue to face as a large proportion of our parish is elderly. The demographics of the parish are changing with the influx of many young families in our parish. Still it is sad not to know that some familiar faces are no longer with us.

Several months have passed by since my last Update. In the second half of 2018, I experienced many problems with my old computer largely because many of its programs were no longer supported. I finally gave in and bought myself a new computer but the technician who transferred data from the old computer to the new one created many problems. One of them was that he somehow transferred an old e-mail list with only 500 addresses instead of the more recent one which had 1,500 addresses. Fortunately SOCA Vice President Grant Alger came to my rescue just before Christmas and retrieved the right list. There may still be some discrepancies, however, so if you know of any members who did not receive this Update, please ask them to contact me (contact details in the letterhead above) as I would like to bring my address list up to date. Thank you.

I have also had some health issues to deal with and in November went down with a nasty bout of influenza. I lost 20 lbs in two weeks and am only just beginning to feel nearly back to normal. I know that many of you are facing much more serious health problems but I mention my illness only because it caused me to put many of my tasks on the back burner and I am now trying to catch up.

### OUR APPEAL TO THE VATICAN

With your financial and moral support, as your duly elected Procurator, I sent our appeal regarding Bishop Henry's Decree relegating St. Patrick's Church to profane but not sordid use to the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura on August 5, 2017. In April 2018, I received confirmation that the Signatura would study our case. We paid the required fees and appointed Avv. Andrea Errera, an experienced Latin lawyer in Rome, recommended by our good friend and adviser, Mr. Philip Gray, President of the St. Joseph Association from the list of Latin lawyers approved by the Signatura to represent clients at this high level of recourse.

The procedures adopted by the Signatura are very thorough and it may seem that nothing is happening for long periods. Fortunately, Professor Andrea and his assistant Avv. Federika Boldrini have been very kind in keeping us informed of what is going on. Our SOCA Executive has worked hard to provide Professor Andrea with information and documents to help him in the preparation of the *memoriales* (written submissions) he had to present to the Signatura at various times.

The first major hurdle was crossed when the Vatican Promoter of Justice, Fr. Nikolas Schoch OFM, a Franciscan friar who is possibly the foremost authority in the world on church closures, deemed our recourse worthy of proceeding to the next step, that is, to be considered by the Congress, a group of four or more cardinals and bishops, including the Prefect of the Signatura, Cardinal Mamberti. Again our recourse could have been rejected at this stage but it was sent on to the final stage, consideration by the full Signatura which is composed of thirteen Cardinals including the Prefect, Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, and eight Bishops.

The lawyers for both sides had to submit their final memorials by mid-December so I expect that a decision will be reached by the Signatura in the next month or two. The decision of the Signatura is usually final and cannot be appealed as the only legal authority higher in the Catholic world is the Pope – and he rarely intervenes once the Signatura has made a decision.

I still feel that this issue of saving our churches could and should have been settled long ago locally and amicably but the powers that be were not prepared to compromise in any way. Now a binding decision will come down from the Signatura and I can only hope that whatever the decision, it will be accepted by both sides with good grace and we can move on from there in a spirit of dutiful acceptance for the good of our parish.

So there you have it, dear SOCA members and friends. You now know why you have not heard from me for several months and you also now know that you did not miss anything of vital importance during the interim period. Depend on it that when I receive definite information about a decision made by the Signatura, whether favourable or not, you, dear members and supporters of SOCA, who have been such a source of support to the SOCA Executive, will be the first to know.

Once again, my very best wishes to you for happiness and good health in 2019!

Love and God bless!

Francis

Secretary of SOCA, Procurator

cc:

Very Reverend Kevin Tumback, Pastor of All Saints; Reverend Albert Sayson, Associate Pastor of All Saints Parish; Mr. Philip Gray, President of the St. Joseph Association, Professor Andrea Errera, Avv. Federica Boldrini.

