

# SAVE OUR CHURCHES ASSOCIATION

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May 21, 2014

The Most Reverend Bishop Frederick Henry  
Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary  
Calgary Pastoral Centre  
Suite 209, 120 – 17 Avenue SW  
Calgary AB T2S 2T2

Dear Bishop Henry:

Re: Reopening St. Patrick's Church

In March 2011, you wrote to the parishioners of All Saints Parish announcing that St. Patrick's Church would be shuttered effective on August 1, 2011. The ostensible reason given was the lack of local support for the proposed columbarium in the basement of the church. Later this month, 1000 days will have elapsed since St. Patrick's Church was shuttered.

I am writing to ask you to rescind the order to shutter St. Patrick's Church for the following reasons:

1. The Parish Building Committee charged with building a new church has admitted in its report released January 15, 2014 that it favours an outdoor columbarium.
2. The closure of St. Patrick's caused a great deal of unhappiness, even resentment, in our parish. We have had many parishioners leave our parish. Some have migrated to other area R.C. churches, some have stopped attending church and some have even gone over to churches of other denominations. There is an enormous feeling of hurt in our community and continued closure will only serve to exacerbate the wounds.
3. Disposal of all three (or even two) of the present churches should never have been made part of the package proposal to build a new church, especially as it ran counter to the strongly expressed opposition of the majority of parishioners, opposition that was completely ignored.
4. In spite of sporadic attempts to raise money to build a new church, the funds are not there to support going ahead with construction. Fund raising efforts have virtually stopped and Pastor Kevin Tumback is left with the stress of defending a project which appears to have little likelihood of proceeding.
5. For almost three years now, the parishioners of All Saints Parish have had to worship with the largest church in the parish shuttered. This has forced the parishioners to crowd into the two considerably smaller churches and increased the pressure on available parking in the vicinity of St. Basil's and our Lady of the Assumption Church. The closure of St. Patrick's Church has also caused

- scheduling problems for events that could well have been held in the hall that has remain unused since the church was shuttered.
6. There is widespread concern about the deteriorating state of the three churches in All Saints parish. There are reports of one or more leaks in St. Patrick's Church and the spread of black mold. The leak(s) was reported some years ago but no attempt has been made to stop the leaks to the best of our knowledge. It is clear that Diocesan policies on the maintenance of Church properties are not being followed.
  7. As St. Patrick's Church is not being used for religious purposes in its present shuttered state, City taxes amounting to approximately \$29,000.00 p.a. have had to be paid on the property. Whether this sum is paid by the Diocese or the parish, it is ultimately the parishioners who pay the bill. This is unfair as they were not responsible for the closure. As well, the money expended on unnecessary taxes could well have gone towards repairs and refurbishing of St. Patrick's Church.

The above are only some of the compelling reasons that make it clear that the time is overdue for the shepherd to bring his scattered flock back into the fold. I respectfully appeal to you, Bishop Henry, to initiate the process of carrying out any repairs that are necessary prior to reopening St. Patrick's Church. I assure you that you will find that the vast majority of parishioners of All Saints Parish very supportive of such a move.

Yours in Christ,

Don Demers  
Chairman, The Save Our Churches Association (SOCA)