

## St Joseph's Slovenian RCC Committee

In the years since the closing of St. Joseph's, we have had an informal lay committee operating with a view towards looking after St. Joseph's affairs, such as working with Incarnation to organize the annual feast day mass. The current committee is comprised of Stephen Antalics, Andrew Azan, Joseph Fuisz, Veronica (Duh-Loncar), and Shirely Messics Daluisio.

In view of the news from the Allentown Diocese this week concerning the planned closing and final mass, we thought it was important to share some recent history with the St. Joseph's community.

**Opportunity to Purchase St. Joseph's.** The Allentown Diocese offered to sell the Church to a lay group for continued operation as a Church. While the purchase price was fairly reasonable, the extensive repairs the Church needs (particularly concrete restoration estimated at over one million dollars) – to say nothing of the monthly costs of maintaining the Church -- made this a near-impossible “ask” for the St. Joseph's community, in the unanimous view of the Committee. Moreover, the access and use limitations proposed by the Allentown Diocese – even in this purchase scenario – created a further significant hurdle.

**Where from Here?** We are pursuing two efforts. Stephen Antalics is spearheading a “Hail Mary” effort to solicit funds from abroad to purchase the Church. Second, as a fallback position, Andrew Azan is attempting to negotiate the handling of certain items from St. Joseph's Church, to be retained locally and in the case other items to be returned to Europe. A specific item we seek is the vigil light, paid for by the Parishioners of the village of Dolenci. We would like this vigil light, which has presided over the sacramental life of the Church, to go the parish of St. Nicholas, Dolenci, Prekurje.

**Planning the Last Mass (10:30 AM, March 18, 2023).** Andrew Azan, as in the past years, is leading the mass & luncheon planning. We are grateful to Andrew for this work. Andrew has already received many requests for the mass and things that might be done to mark the occasion. Andrew is doing his best to incorporate such ideas, it being understood that ultimately, all ideas cannot be accommodated in a single event. Nonetheless, the Committee is confident that the last mass will be a fitting tribute.

Please feel free to contact the Committee. In this regard, please understand that the Committee members are all too aware that the Committee is an informal, though well-intentioned body. The Committee claims no authority beyond its affection for St. Joseph's and the St. Joseph's community at large.

Yours in Christ,

St. Joseph's Committee  
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