

## **A PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE OF ST. ROSE CHURCH, KANKAKEE**

March 24, 2018

St. John Paul II Parish in Kankakee was formed by the merger of three parishes: St. Martin of Tours, St. Rose of Lima and St. Teresa. The new parish has decided to use the former St. Martin property as its main facility, with the St. Teresa property serving primarily for its community outreach programs. The parish has no need for the St. Rose property. Yet there are many former St. Rose parishioners, and others in the Kankakee community who have expressed a strong desire to maintain the beautiful and historic church. (There is also a modern rectory on the property and a large parking lot.)

To respond to that desire, Bishop Conlon, with the support of the priests of the Kankakee Deanery, makes the following proposal:

1. An "association of the Christian faithful" would be formed by interested persons to oversee what would be designated as the "St. Rose Chapel". Members of the association would choose officers for the association.
2. The association, with the assistance of a canon lawyer, would develop statutes to govern itself as an ecclesiastical entity. Bishop Conlon would approve the statutes. The association would also need to establish itself as a civil entity and acquire its own tax-exempt status.
3. The St. Rose property, including the church, rectory, and parking lot, would be deeded to the association by Bishop Conlon on behalf of St. John Paul II Parish. The association, not the diocese or parish, would thereafter be responsible for all costs associated with the upkeep and operation of the property. It would also be free to use or dispose of the rectory and parking lot as it chooses, within the bounds of Catholic moral teaching. The diocesan trust would retain "right of first refusal" to reacquire the church, at no cost, should the association be dissolved.
4. The church would be used primarily for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, either perpetually or at least for extensive periods of time and open to the public. Other rites, not directly associated with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, would require the permission of the bishop, which would rarely be granted.
5. The association would nominate a priest-chaplain for appointment by the bishop. The chaplain would oversee the liturgical aspects of the chapel in cooperation with the officers of the association. It is understood that the chaplain would likely be a priest who is retired or has another assignment and who would not require a salary and benefits, but only a modest stipend.

Persons interested in pursuing this proposal are invited to meet with each other. If there is a desire to move forward, someone from the group should contact Bishop Conlon by the end of May, 2018. He will then consult with the pastoral and finance councils of St. John Paul II Parish and the diocesan Presbyteral Council and Finance Council. All these groups have to be consulted before the St. Rose property can be deeded over to another party. Bishop Conlon will also put the group in contact with a canon lawyer who can assist with the writing of statutes for the association of the Christian faithful.