



Saint Michael Society

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COMMUNITY WILL NOT ACCEPT THE CLOSURE OF THE ICONIC SAINT MICHAEL'S CHURCH

Rochester NY, December 23, 2020:

Members of the Saint Michael Society, The Father Larry Tracy Advocacy Center, St. Michael's Church Community and the Rochester Latinx Community will not accept the plans set forth by Fr. Mickey McGrath to permanently close the iconic St. Michael's Church on North Clinton Street. On Sunday, December 20th, Fr. McGrath, the Pastor of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish, formally announced the closure of the iconic St. Michael's Church, one of the parish's three worship sites.

A group of parishioners and other Catholics came together to form the St. Michael Society, and submitted a plan to Fr. McGrath in late November to transfer the care of St. Michael Church to the society, in order that St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish could be permanently relieved of all expenses associated with its continued existence as a Roman Catholic sacred space. The future of St. Michael Church has been a source of discussion within the parish over the course of the last year, and the members of the St. Michael Society are seeking to exercise their rights under canon law to assume the financial responsibility for keeping a Catholic church building a Roman Catholic sacred space. Fr. McGrath is not permitted to insist upon the permanent closure of St. Michael Church if Catholics are prepared to assume complete responsibility for its continued existence as a Roman Catholic sacred space.

“At a time when St. Michael’s is most needed in this community Fr. Mickey has recommended closing the church. By removing the spiritual center, the Latino community and neighborhood will suffer from his decision,” stated Roberto Burgos.

Burgos, along with parishioners Mr. Nick Basile, and Mr. Carlos Garcia have formed the St. Michael Society to ensure St. Michael’s Church is not permanently closed. As part of the newly created St. Michael Society, they have engaged a Canon Law expert and prepared a plan to assume financial responsibility for the church in order to keep the neo-gothic sacred site open.

“The reason for contacting a Canon Law expert was to ensure that legal requirements concerning the church’s future are being followed. In doing so, it ensures accountability, and that respect is shown to both the legal process and to the Catholic faithful in the city who have a right to take responsibility for this church.” Mr. Basile added.

The St. Michael Society is working closely with The Father Tracy Advocacy Center and it’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Rudy Rivera to form a strategic plan to provide needed services to the community surrounding St. Michael’s Church.

“The Father Larry Tracy Advocacy Center stands ready to work with our community to help provide services to those in need. It is very unfortunate that Pastor Mickey McGrath has decided to close a regional treasure without any meaningful community input in the process,” said Mr. Rivera.

In a recent letter to parishioners, Fr. Mickey McGrath stated, ***“Everything we do has a cost, and all of it depends upon the generous giving of parishioners like you.”*** What he conveniently forgot to point out is that parishioners have increased the giving surpassing the parish leadership financial projections for this year. This in light of the fact that the St. Michael’s community is one of the poorest congregations in the Diocese of Rochester.

“St. Michael’s is one of the oldest and most iconic sacred spaces in all of the Diocese of Rochester. It has spiritual, as well as historical significance to the greater Rochester region and the many ethnic groups it has served in over a century. This is the worst possible Christmas gift ever to be given to the Latinx community in Rochester” said Mr. Garcia.

For Further Information: Contact Carlos Garcia, 585-797-3970