

Eastern Erie Vicariate Update  
Feast, Saint Leo the Great  
November 10, 2021

Vicariate Sisters and Brothers:

We have received recent communications from Fr. Bryan Zielenieski, Director Diocesan Renewal, and from Fr. Peter Karalus, Vicar General.

Fr. Bryan informed us the **final draft of Parishes in Families** will be presented to the Presbyteral Council on November 23, 2021 and, when confirmed by Bishop Fisher, publicly announced. Of the 36 proposed Families, 12 Families will have changes. Letters have been sent to parishes involved.

After the public release of Parishes in Families, I will send group contact names and email addresses of pastors and designated parish leaders to each of our 4 Families to enable communication among parishes. Fr. Bryan has indicated a temporary interim person/pastor will be chosen for each Family to facilitate communication and to assemble parish leadership to take the **“next steps”** as these parishes draw closer together within the timeline set by the office of the Vicar of Renewal and Development.

Fr. Peter sent out a communication on the **celebration of 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Diocese of Buffalo**. It includes a tentative schedule of major events. He is requesting pastors to propose/submit three dates for Parish Day of Prayer; identify contact person for Parish/Diocesan Day of Service (10/22/22); compose/submit brief parish history for the commemorative anniversary book; and to identify/submit aspects of your parish worthy of pilgrimage e.g. shrines, architecture, works of art etc. for the Pilgrimage Guide. All of the above information is requested by November 24, 2021.

Fr. Peter is asking Vicars to propose three dates for the **Bishop to celebrate Mass** in every Vicariate during the yearlong anniversary celebration. I suggested: Wednesday May 25, 2022, Vigil Mass, Ascension of the Lord; Thursday May 5, 2022, National Day of Prayer USA; or Monday June 6, 2022, Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church. If/when one of the dates is approved by the Bishop, I'll inform vicariate members, parishes, Catholic schools and Religious Education/Family Faith Formation programs. Mass will be celebrated at 7 PM in the Church of the Annunciation, Elma. All are welcome.

I send you this summary of diocesan expectations on the feast of **Saint Leo the Great**. He was elected pope in 440. His pontificate lasted until 461. He managed, by God's grace, to lead/guide the Church during tumultuous times: collapse of the Western Roman Empire, heretical dissent, and invasion of barbarian armies. He persuaded Attila the Hun not to sack Rome. He was less successful with the Vandal Gaiseric. From Rome, he proposed the language at the Council of Chalcedon that settled the long protracted theological debate over one person and dual natures of Christ. Council Fathers, relieved, cried out: "Peter has spoken." Only much later was Pope Leo titled: "the Great" and made spiritual Doctor of the Church. He can be our inspiration as we go down the Road to Renewal with hope, with uncertainty and with some degree of fear. "One day at a time."

Good health and God's blessing for Fr. Rick Poblocki as he retires. Pray for Sister Lori High and her family. Her sister Cheryl High died. Wake is today/Wednesday 4-8 PM Amigone Funeral Home, 2600 Sheridan Drive. Also keep Fr. Dave Bellittiere in your prayers. His mom is under Hospice care.

Fr. Gene Ulrich