



## DIOCESE OF LAKE CHARLES

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*Office of the Bishop*

### **Announcement of Chancery Consolidation**

**May 5, 2023**

To the Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of Lake Charles:

Hurricane recovery continues to be a long-term process. Every parish sustained damage, and the Diocese continues to focus on repairing parish facilities. As the focus of the recovery has been on the parishes, schools, and ministerial services, the existing administrative buildings of the diocese have remained in a state of disrepair.

Following extensive consultation beginning August of 2022 with the Presbyteral Council and the Diocesan Finance Council, the Diocese of Lake Charles has decided to consolidate its offices into one location by purchasing a facility, the former Safety Council of Southwest Louisiana located at 1201 Ryan Street. The former Chancery at 414 Iris Street suffered serious damages in Hurricane Laura and Hurricane Delta in 2020. This building remains closed. To continue ministry, the Diocese scattered her offices across five different leased and borrowed facilities. However, the Diocese cannot continue to address the massive work of recovery and continue to operate effectively in disparate locations.

After evaluating the available options, the Presbyteral Council, the Finance Council, and I, as Bishop, agree that purchasing an already move-in ready building is the most cost-effective option. Repairing and adapting the current structures would cost at least \$6 million. Replacing with new construction was estimated to cost at least \$15 million. The cost of purchasing the new building and renovating it for our needs will be approximately \$3.3 million, substantially less than the other two options and tripling our available space.

No recovery funds allocated to rebuilding parishes or schools will be redirected to the purchase of the new chancery. The Diocese has secured a mortgage for a large portion of the total cost and will finance payments through general operations. The remaining cost will come from funds assigned by previous bishops and me for purposes such as this. To continue effective recovery, a consolidation into a larger building is necessary.

Diocesan offices include the following: Administration, Catholic Schools, Tribunal, Family Life, Pro-Life, Marriage, Communications, Religious Education, Fiscal, Vocations, Archives, Youth Protection and Safe Environment, Human Resources, Clergy Immigration, Recovery, and Development.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Please review the attached document containing frequently asked questions, which will aid you in presenting this information to your staffs, parishioners, and others. These will be posted on

the diocese's informational page at <http://www.lcdiocese.org/3-news/3610-new-chancery-2023>. Please refer to these when addressing questions that arise.

I have appointed Fr. Joseph Caraway as Vice-Chancellor to guide the process of consolidation. I am most grateful for his leadership. For questions not addressed here or in the FAQ, please reach out to Fr. Caraway and his office at 337-439-7400 or [info@lcdiocese.org](mailto:info@lcdiocese.org).

I look upon this as a positive move in the right direction. For the first time in the history of the Diocese, all diocesan offices will be under one roof. This consolidation will advance our ministry and better serve the needs of our people. I am dedicating this new chancery to Our Lady of Lourdes in gratitude for her constant intercession over my 16 years as bishop. As I was praying to her about this decision, I was standing at the grotto located behind the cathedral when I realized that the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes looks down Bilbo Street to the location of our new facility. She has been watching over us this entire time, and I will seek to honor her in a special way so that she watches over both ends of Bilbo Street just as she watches over the entire Church.

I ask you to join me in praying to Our Lady of Lourdes. With my gratitude for your support and the assurance of my prayers, I remain

Devotedly yours in our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glen John Provost", with a small cross symbol to the left of the first letter.

✠Glen John Provost  
Bishop of Lake Charles