



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
153 Ash Street, Manchester, NH 03104-4396
(603) 669-3100 www.catholicnh.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 31, 2025

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
TARA BISHOP
603-663-0169

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH TO BECOME COLUMBARIUM, CHAPEL

LACONIA, NH – The Diocese of Manchester, the Roman Catholic Church in New Hampshire, will move forward with a plan to repair and renovate St. Joseph Church in Laconia for use as a columbarium, a structure for the reposition of funeral urns within niches, and a chapel.

The Diocese, which now owns the St. Joseph Church building, is working closely with the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society and the Pastoral and Finance Councils of St. André Bessette Parish to ensure its preservation. The cost of building repairs is estimated at \$2 million, which the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society has committed to raise. St. André Bessette Parish and the Diocese of Manchester have agreed to assist, according to their capacities. Currently, the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society has raised \$450,000. As a result, the Diocese has rescinded the demolition application with the City of Laconia.

The Diocese will cover the additional estimated \$650,000 to \$750,000 in costs to convert the church building into a combined columbarium and chapel. It has already assumed responsibility for its operating costs.

Once the project is complete, hours of visitation will be offered for the columbarium. Catholic cemeteries in the Diocese of Manchester, including the Mount Calvary Cemeteries in Manchester and Somersworth, currently feature columbaria.

“St. Joseph Church has been an important part of the lives of the faithful in Laconia for generations, and this new use as a columbarium and chapel will continue to serve them for generations to come as a monument to our Catholic belief in the resurrection of the dead and as a place of prayer and reverence for loved ones who have died,” said the Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D., Bishop of Manchester.

“We are pleased that St. Joseph Church will be restored and renovated for ongoing use by the community,” said Linda Normandin, President and Secretary, St. Joseph Church Preservation Society. “Our gratitude extends to all who are supporting this effort with their generous donations and dedicated prayers.”

Donations to the restoration project may be mailed to the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society, PO Box 145, Laconia, NH 03247 or through its website, restorestjoes.org.

For more information about the Diocese of Manchester, visit www.catholicnh.org. St. André Bessette Parish is online at www.standrebesette.org.

###

The Diocese of Manchester is the Roman Catholic Church in New Hampshire, serving the needs of nearly 210,000 Catholics. For more information, please visit www.catholicnh.org/overview.