

# FROM THE *Pastor's Desk*

April 22, 2024

Dear family,

Thank you for participating in the listening session on Wednesday, April 17. First, I have received several proposals to lease our centers. Almost no one urged me to lease our buildings to any outside entities. Our parishes host many group and community gatherings in our centers. These functions have been a source of joy for us.

The listening session was also an opportunity to hear opinions about our Festa. What I heard was very clear. First, we lack the organizers and volunteers to operate a Festa. Very few people set up and take down the booths. Workers prepare many foods for months leading up to the Festa. These are the same generous family members year after year. They can no longer make this commitment because—let's face it—we're all getting older. Too few people wish to work for weeks in advance like our current team members. It would be unjust to ask the few organizers to work even harder to marshal the resources for the Festa again.

Second, there are now two July festivals in Schenectady besides our Festa. A "summer bash" style event takes place on a Friday evening downtown. On the following weekend, the casino is hosting a two-day mega-bazaar. These events would cut into our proceeds, regardless of our selected dates.

Thus, I have determined that we can no longer offer our three-day weekend Festa. We will reimagine our Festa for our community. Our parish will honor Our Lady of Mt. Carmel with an appropriate feast. This update is difficult to read, I know. But this is the current reality we face as a family. We must listen when the Holy Spirit speaks.

Here is the bottom line. We don't wish to lease part of our buildings to anyone. And we can no longer hold the Festa as a three-day intense bazaar. However, the Festa generated about \$30,000 in proceeds for our parish. We still need this income. Our future fundraising must account for this annual revenue target. Thank you for continuing your kind and generous support of the parish. And if we give very little now, this is the right time to pray about true and regular sacrifices to the Lord and the Church community.

God's peace to you,

Fr. Frisoni