



Archdiocese of Newark
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

June 15, 2017

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I know that the Union City community continues to feel pain from the events of March 4. Like you, I was shocked at the loss of life and the injuries that neighbors sustained, at the loss of homes for many of our brothers and sisters, and, finally, the tremendous damage to Ss. Joseph and Michael Church.

I met many of you the night of the tragedy and we shared our fears, asking Christ the Redeemer for guidance and support. I ask that you continue to remember in your prayers all who have been affected by this fire.

Today, I am happy to report that we will rebuild Ss. Joseph and Michael Church.

The reconstruction, which is expected to take some 16 months to complete, once we begin construction, will restore the interior and exterior of the church, and replace the liturgical vessels, vestments, statuary and other items that were lost in the fire. While these efforts will not necessarily replicate the Church exactly as it was, every effort will be made to restore it as closely as possible.

The cost for rebuilding and restoring Ss. Joseph and Michael, estimated to be about \$5 million, will be provided through insurance coverage. In the weeks ahead, members of the Archdiocesan Property Management Administration, Insurance, and New Energies Implementation Team staffs will work together and partner with Father Nathan and the parish staff. Our hope is that your parish will celebrate Christmas 2018 in the restored church.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude to Mayor Brian Stack and Martin Martinetti of the city government as well as Police Chief Richard Molinari and all the members of Union City's Emergency Management and Public Safety staffs for their caring, professionalism and dedication to the people of the community. We could not announce this new start for Ss. Joseph and Michael without their energy, cooperation and steady support.

We promise to keep you informed in the months ahead as the future of your parish begins to take shape. I look forward to celebrating the first liturgy at the restored Ss. Joseph and Michael Church.

We all have prayed strongly and fervently during the past four months for this day. Our prayers have been answered.

Sincerely in Christ the Redeemer,

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

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Archdiocesan Center