

Condemned St. Anne Church in Ashburnham to be torn down

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ASHBURNHAM - St. Anne Church at 162 Center St., condemned after an inspection in July, will be demolished, according to Raymond Delisle, spokesman for the Worcester Diocese.

A date has yet to be set for the razing, Mr. Delisle said Saturday night.

“They still are working on a timetable,” he said. “They’re working closely with the town.”

The church closed July 9 after a Fire Department inspection determined the failing roof and other structural problems made the building unsafe to hold services.

The Rev. John F. Hamm, administrator and priest of St. Anne and St. Denis parishes, said the property will be put up for sale.

He said the decision was reached after a meeting of parishioners July 26. The church was constructed in 1895 and an addition was built in 1930.

After the inspection, he said, all services for the 35 to 40 families from St. Anne parish are being held in St. Denis Church at 85 Main St. for the near future.

Mr. Delisle said, “Basically they will be attending St. Denis Parish Church. They’ve already been working together with St. Denis on a number of their programs, and they’ve shared a pastor with St. Denis for a good 20 years. They’re religious education and other programs were combined with St. Denis.”

According to an article in the July 31 Catholic Free Press, Rev. Hamm said the estimated cost to repair the church is \$200,000 or more, which the small parish cannot afford. Sale of the land will help offset the demolition cost.

Rev. Hamm said he hopes to hold a celebration to mark the church’s closing Aug. 15, the Feast of the Assumption, outside by the statue of St. Anne.