



NEWS RELEASE

DIOCESE OF ERIE

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**Diocese of Erie announces Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism
to buy Venango Catholic High School property**

The Diocese of Erie finalized the sale of the Venango Catholic High School property to the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism (ORA), a regional economic development organization located in Oil City.

ORA's mission is to promote the area's history, while also encouraging tourism, business development and community revitalization. The organization plans to maintain a community focus for the property by using the site to host educational and professional development opportunities.

"The agreement with the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism allows us to not only support a local organization, but one that can do so much for the community," said the Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico, bishop of Erie. "I am pleased to have them shepherd this property forward to provide opportunities for engagement for both Catholics and the wider community."

The diocese had operated the Venango Catholic High School since 1962 but closed it at the end of the 2023-2024 school year due to low enrollment after efforts were made to attempt to keep the school viable. Despite significant efforts made by the school board, administration, school families, volunteers and donors, the financial goals fell short.

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After careful consideration, the sale of the property to ORA will allow it to continue to be a valuable resource to the community, fostering sustainable business growth and a location for community initiatives.

Read more from the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism (ORA) here:

<https://oilregion.org/>

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