



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Archbishop
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

DECREE

OF THE RELEGATION OF

OUR MOTHER OF SORROWS CHURCH, BRIDGEPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Due to the deteriorating condition of Our Mother of Sorrows Church, Bridgeport, a lack of the funding necessary to repair and maintain the church, and a lack of the faithful wishing to worship in the church, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Our Mother of Sorrows Church to profane but not sordid use.

The following grave causes suggest that the church be so relegated and no longer be used for divine worship:

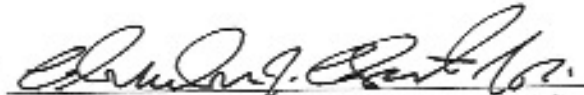
- 1) Our Mother of Sorrows Church is located on the middle floor of a three story structure - with a kitchen below and classrooms above. The entire building is in a serious state of disrepair. This includes many windows that need to be replaced, \$60,000 of repairs needed on the roof, mold problems in various parts of the building which are a health danger, an electrical system that is inadequate, hazardous, and in need of extensive repairs, peeling and hazardous lead based paint on many of the interior walls, a sink hole that has undermined a part of the basement floor, walls that are bulging and cracking,
- 2) Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Swedesburg, which has ownership of Our Mother of Sorrows Church, does not have the resources to repair and maintain the Our Mother of Sorrows Church building. Sacred Heart of Jesus parish also has responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of three other churches and numerous other parish buildings. While the parish has some savings, it is experiencing considerable operating deficits. It is estimated that the deficit for the current fiscal year will be approximately \$170,000;
- 3) there is no other source of funding for the necessary repairs;

- 4) the financial burden of repairing and maintaining the church would cause important pastoral programs of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, such as outreach to the poor and educational efforts, to suffer due to lack of funds;
- 5) the church building does not have any special architectural, historical, or artistic significance; and,
- 6) Our Mother of Sorrows Parish was closed as a parish in 2001. The pastor reports that there have been no requests to use the church for some time. The people who had been attending Our Mother of Sorrows Church are in very close proximity to Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and several other churches in Bridgeport.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescripts of canon 1222, §2 of the Code of Canon Law, having judged that sufficient grave causes are present and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired, having obtained the consent of the Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish who also has the agreement of his parish pastoral and finance councils, and having consulted with the Council of Priests on May 22, 2015 with all members in attendance in agreement, I hereby **DECREE** that Our Mother of Sorrows Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This decree is effective as of July 15, 2015, and is to be communicated to the members of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish and to the faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the eighth day of June, in the Year of Our Lord 2015.

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Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M.Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL.


Reverend Monsignor Gerard C. Mesure, J.C.D.
Chancellor