



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

## **DECREE**

### **OF THE RELEGATION OF**

### **SAINT MARGARET MARY ALAOCQUE CHURCH, ESSINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE**

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Essington, Pennsylvania has served as a worship site of Saint Gabriel Parish in Norwood, Pennsylvania from July 2014 until the present time. Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is no longer needed by Saint Gabriel Parish, and it is believed that the costs of continuously repairing and maintaining Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church well into the future would significantly limit the ministry of Saint Gabriel Parish. Consideration, therefore, must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church to profane but not sordid use.

The following grave causes suggest that Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church be so relegated and no longer be used for divine worship:

- 1) Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is no longer needed by Saint Gabriel Parish. On July 1, 2014, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish, Essington, Pennsylvania merged with Saint Gabriel Parish, Norwood, Pennsylvania. Since the time of the merger, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church has served as a worship site of Saint Gabriel Parish, but only funerals are still celebrated at the worship site. In the past year, approximately eight funerals have been celebrated at Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church. In addition, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is located in close proximity to Saint Gabriel Church. There does not exist an undue burden for the faithful to come to Saint Gabriel Church to worship;
- 2) The decision to seek relegation of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church to profane but not sordid use was made known to the parish community at-large and no major objections emerged;
- 3) Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is physically connected to a rectory and a school building. On the same property on which the physically connected church, rectory and school sits, there is also a parking lot and a convent. Saint Gabriel Parish may wish to sell the entire property on which Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is located, as it is foreseen that the sale of this entire property would greatly enhance the future economic condition of the parish. It is also foreseen, however,

- that potential buyers will only be interested if the entire property on which Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is located is made available for sale;
- 4) Saint Gabriel Parish has endeavored to maintain Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church in good repair. However, it is foreseen that sustaining the Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church building well into the future would not be financially good for the Saint Gabriel Parish community. In the past fiscal year, Saint Gabriel Parish allocated over \$25,000 of its assets to maintain Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, and this allocation included the repair of the Church's heating system, which cost approximately \$12,000. Furthermore, as it is believed that Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church is no longer needed by the newly formed parish community, it is foreseen that continuing to allocate parish financial resources into the upkeep of the Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church building would not be considered a prudent use of Saint Gabriel Parish's finances now or in the future;
  - 5) The Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church building does not have any particular architectural, historical or artistic significance; and,
  - 6) Having all of the parishioners worship at Saint Gabriel Church will continue to enhance parish unity and help parishioners focus on the future of the parish.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescripts of canon 1212 and 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, and having consulted with the Council of Priests on March 17, 2017, I hereby **DECREE** that Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Essington, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This Decree is effective as of June 12, 2017 and is to be communicated to the members of Saint Gabriel Parish and to the faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

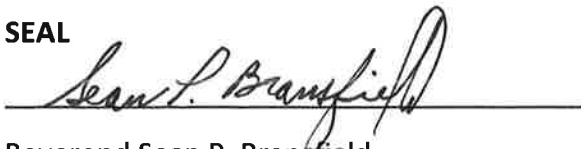
Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the 4th day of May, in the Year of Our Lord 2017.



Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL



Reverend Sean P. Bransfield

Vice-Chancellor