

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

DECREE

OF THE RELEGATION OF

SAINT LEO CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Saint Leo Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has been designated as a church for worship by Our Lady of Consolation Parish in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania since July 1, 2013. Saint Leo Church is no longer needed by Our Lady of Consolation Parish, and it is believed that the continued costs of maintaining and repairing Saint Leo Church would significantly prevent and weaken the financial stability of Our Lady of Consolation Parish. Consideration, therefore, must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Saint Leo Church to profane but not sordid use.

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

- 1) Saint Leo Church is no longer needed by Our Lady of Consolation Parish. On July 1, 2013, Saint Leo Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania merged with Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Saint Leo Church has not been used as a regular church for worship since January 1, 2018. Since that time, parish groups have used the church a few times when Our Lady of Consolation Church was not available for them to use. There have also been two services for the "renewal of wedding vows" and a few funerals during 2018, but even the funerals have become rarer over time;
- 2) Saint Leo Church is located in close proximity to Our Lady of Consolation Church. There does not exist an undue burden for the faithful to come to Our Lady of Consolation Church to worship;
- 3) The decision to seek relegation of Saint Leo Church to profane but not sordid use was made known to the Our Lady of Consolation Parish community-at-large and no major objections emerged;
- 4) Besides the church building of Saint Leo Church, there had been other real estate properties and physical assets located on the property that were formerly owned by Saint Leo Parish, specifically a school and convent. These buildings, along with the former Saint Leo Rectory, have already been sold by Our Lady of Consolation Parish, leaving only a little-used church on the grounds owned by the parish;
- 5) Our Lady of Consolation Parish has striven to maintain Saint Leo Church in good repair. However, the costs of maintaining Saint Leo Church have placed a significant financial strain upon Our Lady of Consolation Parish, which has not been conducive to the parish's financial solvency. The cost for maintaining Saint Leo Church in the 2016-2017 fiscal year was \$44,531.00; during the same period, Our Lady of Consolation Parish experienced a deficit of \$158,048.00. Our Lady of

Consolation Parish also had a debt of \$284,085.00 as of June 30, 2018. Saint Leo Church will also require some plumbing repairs if it were to continue to function. Because of these financial burdens currently being experienced by Our Lady of Consolation Parish, it is believed that the possible eventual sale of the Saint Leo Church property would be best for the current and future financial stability of Our Lady of Consolation Parish;

- 6) The Saint Leo Church building does not have any particular architectural, historical or artistic significance; and,
- 7) Having all of the parishioners continue to worship at Our Lady of Consolation Church will continue to enhance parish unity and help parishioners focus on the future of the parish.

Accordingly, in virtue of the precepts 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 September 17, 2018, I hereby **DECREE** that Saint Leo Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This Decree is effective as of January 7, 2019 and is to be communicated to the members of Our Lady of Consolation Parish and to the faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. Canonical recourse to this Decree is to be sought according to the norms of canon law. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

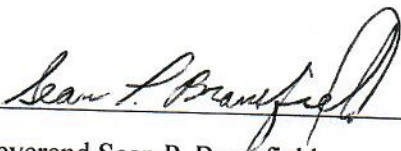
Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the 29th day of November, 2018.



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

Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL



Reverend Sean P. Bransfield

Vice-Chancellor