

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

DECREE

OF THE RELEGATION OF

INCARNATION OF OUR LORD CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Due to the deteriorating condition of Incarnation of Our Lord Church, Philadelphia, and a lack of the funding necessary to repair and maintain the church, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Incarnation of Our Lord 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:

- Incarnation of Our Lord Church would require extensive repairs is it were to continue to be used for worship. A September 10, 2013 report on the facade of the church from the engineering firm of O'Donnell & Naccarato, Philadelphia shows that the church requires approximately \$263,000 of masonry repairs that should be done in the next two or three years. An additional \$97,000 of repairs (including repairs to terra cotta work, replacing tower louvers and repairing and replacing some windows) are recommended to be done in the next three to five or more years. In addition, an estimated \$80,000 of work needs to be done on the roof and an estimated \$50,000 of repairs are needed in the interior of the church. Maintenance, utilities and other routine expenses of the church of the church costs approximately \$50,000 annually.
- Saint Helena Parish, Philadelphia, which has ownership of Incarnation of Our Lord Church, does not have the resources to repair and maintain the Incarnation of Our Lord Church building while still maintaining parish functions. Saint Helena Parish does have financial reserves of approximately \$446,000, however, approximately \$115,000 of this is restricted to another designated use. The parish, which is located in a poorer section of the archdiocese, is also experiencing serious operating deficits. It is estimated that the deficit for the current fiscal year will be approximately \$75,000;

- there is no other source of funding for the maintenance and necessary repairs;
- 4) the financial burden of repairing and maintaining the church would cause important pastoral programs of Incarnation of Our Lord Parish, such as the parish elementary school and outreach to the needy people in the area, to suffer due to lack of funds;
- the church building does not have any special architectural, historical, or artistic significance; and,
- Over the last year a monthly Sunday Mass has been celebrated in Incarnation of Our Lord Church. This church, however, is only one mile from Saint Helena Church and the people who had been worshiping at Incarnation of Our Lord Church already worship at Saint Helena Church most Sundays. So the relegation of Incarnation of Our Lord Church would not be burdensome to them.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescripts of canon 1222, §2 of the <u>Code of Canon Law</u>, 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 Saint Helena 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 Incarnation of Our Lord 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 Saint Helena 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.

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

Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL

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

Chancellor