

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

## **DECREE**

### **OF THE RELEGATION OF**

### **SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

### **TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE**

Saint Mary of the Assumption Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has served as a worship site of Saint John the Baptist Parish, Philadelphia since 2012. The church, however, is no longer needed by the parish and the parish lacks the funding necessary to maintain Saint Mary of the Assumption Church without seriously impeding the ministry of the parish. Consideration, therefore, must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Saint Mary of the Assumption 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) Saint Mary of the Assumption Church is no longer needed by Saint John the Baptist Parish. There have been few requests to use Saint Mary of the Assumption Church for public worship. In addition it is located in close proximity and in the same neighborhood as Saint John the Baptist Church, so it is not a burden for the faithful to come to the parish church to worship;
- 2) Saint John the Baptist Parish has endeavored to keep Saint Mary of the Assumption Church in good repair. The parish, however, faces approximately \$900,000 to 1,400,000 in expenses for necessary repairs to the parish church, has responsibility for maintaining another church within the parish, and has a debt of approximately \$400,000. The annual costs of maintaining Saint Mary of the Assumption church are \$33,000, but because this church building cannot be reasonably separated from other unused parish buildings on the same property, the parish is forced to maintain and pay taxes on these buildings as well. This brings the annual cost of keeping the church to approximately \$138,000. The parish does not have the resources to continue to repair and to maintain Saint Mary of the Assumption Church without negatively impacting the ministries of the parish;

- 3) there is no other source of funding for the costs of repairing and maintaining the church;
- 4) the church building does not have any particular architectural, historical, or artistic significance; and,
- 5) having all of the parishioners worship at the parish church will enhance parish unity.

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 16, 2015, I hereby **DECREE** that Saint Mary of the Assumption Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This decree is effective as of November 1, 2015, and is to be communicated to the members of Saint John the Baptist 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 twenty-ninth day of September, 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  
Chancellor