



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

DECREE

OF THE RELEGATION OF

OUR LADY OF RANSOM CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Our Lady of Ransom Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has been designated as a church for worship by Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania since June 19, 2017. Our Lady of Ransom Church is no longer needed by Resurrection of Our Lord Parish, and it is believed that the continued costs of securing and maintaining Our Lady of Ransom Church would significantly weaken the financial stability of Resurrection of Our Lord Parish. Consideration, therefore, must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Our Lady of Ransom Church to profane but not sordid use.

The following grave causes suggest that Our Lady of Ransom Church be so relegated and no longer be used for divine worship:

- 1) Our Lady of Ransom Church is no longer needed by Resurrection of Our Lord Parish. On June 19, 2017, Our Lady of Ransom Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania merged with Resurrection of Our Lord Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Our Lady of Ransom Church has not been used as a regular church for worship since that date. There has been only one liturgical service held at Our Lady of Ransom Church since that time, a funeral which took place in the summer of 2017;
- 2) Our Lady of Ransom Church is located less than one mile from Resurrection of Our Lord Church. There does not exist an undue burden for the faithful to come to Resurrection of Our Lord Church to worship;
- 3) The decision to seek relegation of Our Lady of Ransom Church to profane but not sordid use was made known to the Resurrection of Our Lord Parish community-at-large and no major objections emerged;
- 4) Resurrection of Our Lord Parish has striven to maintain Our Lady of Ransom Church in good repair. However, the costs of maintaining Our Lady of Ransom Church have placed a significant financial strain upon Resurrection of Our Lord Parish and these costs are not conducive to the parish's financial solvency. In particular, the cost of maintaining Our Lady of Ransom Church over the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$36,123. The parish has unfortunately started to have a debt balance since the merger of the two parishes took place, which totaled \$79,253 on June 30, 2018 and increased to \$86,078 on February 21, 2019. The cash and investment balance has dropped over the previous year and a half, and the parish ran a deficit of \$18,513 for the fiscal year 2017-2018. The removal of this outlay of funds plus the possible income from the sale of the church building would help to stabilize the parish's financial situation;

- 5) An attempt was made to have another Catholic group take over the building, but this did not come to fruition;
- 6) While not currently needing significant repairs, the quality of the church building is rapidly declining, and it has been broken into twice and vandalized since the merger. It is unworthy for a sacred space to continue to be vandalized in such a way, and as it is not foreseen that the building will be put into regular use again as a church, relegation would appear to be the best option to prevent further sacrilegious acts from occurring;
- 7) The Our Lady of Ransom Church building does not have any particular architectural, historical or artistic significance; and,
- 8) Having all of the parishioners worship at Resurrection of Our Lord Church will continue to enhance parish unity as it has over the past two years, and this will 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 June 6, 2019, I hereby **DECREE** that Our Lady of Ransom Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This Decree is effective as of September 3, 2019 and is to be communicated to the members of Resurrection of Our Lord 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.

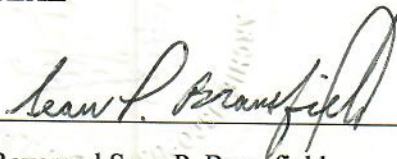
Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the 25th day of July, 2019.



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

Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL



Reverend Sean P. Bransfield

Vice-Chancellor