



## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

# DECREE

## OF THE RELEGATION OF

### HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH, SHARON HILL, PENNSYLVANIA

### TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Holy Spirit Church in Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania has been designated as a church for worship by St. George Parish in Glenolden, Pennsylvania since 2014. Holy Spirit Church is no longer needed by St. George Parish, and it is believed that the costs of maintaining and repairing Holy Spirit Church would significantly harm the financial stability of St. George Parish. Consideration, therefore, must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Holy Spirit Church to profane but not sordid use.

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

- 1) Holy Spirit Church is no longer needed by St. George Parish. On July 1, 2014, Holy Spirit Parish, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania merged into St. George Parish, Glenolden, Pennsylvania. St. George Church was designated as the parish church, with Holy Spirit Church being an alternate church for worship. However, regular worship at Holy Spirit Church ceased in January 2015 due to a significant drop in the number of people attending the scheduled Sunday Mass at that location. Further, there have been no requests for the celebration of baptisms, weddings, or funerals in Holy Spirit Church since that time. No problems have arisen with parish liturgies being held only in St. George Church.
- 2) Holy Spirit Church is located relatively close to St. George Church, with just over a mile between the two buildings. There does not exist an undue burden for the faithful to come to St. George Church to worship.
- 3) The decision to seek relegation of Holy Spirit Church to profane but not sordid use was made known to the St. George Parish community-at-large, and no major objections emerged.
- 4) Holy Spirit Church is in serious disrepair. The state of the church building factored into the decision to suspend regular worship at the site in 2015, and there have been no major improvements since that time. Estimates to restore the church building to a state appropriate for the celebration of the liturgy total approximately \$523,000. In addition, yearly recurring expenses to maintain the church in a restored state are estimated to be

approximately \$73,000. These expenses cannot be undertaken by St. George Parish at this time. Due to the pandemic, repairs needed to the St. George Church building, and the loss of other sources of income, the parish has incurred deficit spending for the past three years. In addition, the parish must undertake expensive repairs of the former Holy Spirit School building, which the parish is currently leasing. Even though the parish has no archdiocesan debt currently, the additional financial strain that would be caused by attempting to restore Holy Spirit Church to a state usable for liturgical worship would severely impede the parish's ability to carry out its mission.

- 5) The Holy Spirit Church building itself does not have any particular architectural, historical, or artistic significance. Some individual items of artistic interest contained within the building can easily be removed and repurposed for use in another appropriate location.
- 6) Having all of the parishioners continue to worship at St. George 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 June 24, 2021, I hereby **DECREE** that Holy Spirit Church, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This Decree is effective as of November 15, 2021 and is to be communicated to the members of St. George Parish and to the faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. Recourse may be taken against this decree in accord with the norm of law. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

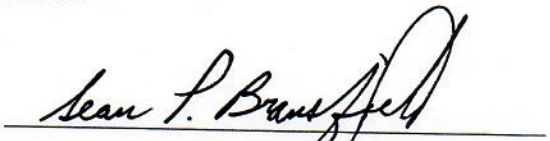
Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the 30th of September, 2021.



Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez

Archbishop of Philadelphia

SEAL



Reverend Sean P. Bransfield

Vice-Chancellor