



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

DECREE

In nomine Domini, Amen.

This decree concerns the relegation to profane but not sordid use (cc. 1222 §2) of Saint Laurent Church in Meriden, Connecticut, a sacred edifice belonging to Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish, Meriden, Connecticut.

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, the Parishes of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Saint Joseph, Saint Laurent and Saint Mary, of Meriden, Connecticut, and Holy Angels of South Meriden, Connecticut, were merged by an extinctive union on June 29, 2017, creating the new juridic entity named Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish with five (5) sacred edifices, that is, the Churches of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Saint Joseph, Saint Laurent and Saint Mary, and Holy Angels; and

WHEREAS, no recourse was filed against this decree in the Congregation for the Clergy; and

WHEREAS, on May 21, 2018, the pastor, supported by the trustees, finance council, and pastoral council members of the aforementioned parish, requested by letter that Saint Laurent Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use and that the building be sold to an appropriate buyer for some other appropriate use; and

WHEREAS, the letter described the church building of Saint Laurent as a financial burden on the parish due to the financial health of the parish and the annual operating costs associated with the buildings; and

WHEREAS, an investigation was conducted into the patrimony of the former Parish of Saint Laurent. This included an examination of the deeds to all church real estate. There are no covenants, codicils, or restrictions on the church building; and

WHEREAS, I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on June 18, 2018, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Saint Laurent Church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- i. All other reasonable sources of funding or assistance have been considered and found lacking or inadequate to maintain the Church building and/or facilities in general;
- ii. The strategic pastoral planning for the Archdiocese was to reduce the number of churches so that our local churches are characterized by spiritual vitality, organizational efficacy and accountability, and social and financial responsibility;

- iii. The number of parishioners has decreased;
- iv. Closure will not harm the good of souls;
- v. The unity of the parish will be promoted.

And WHEREAS, the Presbyteral Council voted unanimously to recommend that Saint Laurent Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and

WHEREAS, the newly established parish of Our Lady Queen of Angels has come together so admirably and has been welcomed enthusiastically by so many members of the Faithful in Meriden;

WHEREAS, I have concluded that the economic hardship of maintaining the building and its lack of usefulness to Our Lady Queen of Angels constitute grave cause sufficient in law to support the relegation of the church building to profane but not sordid use;

I, Leonard P. Blair, in my capacity as Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Hartford, having in mind my responsibility to address in the best way the spiritual needs of the people of Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish specifically, and the needs of the Archdiocese of Hartford generally, hereby decree:

1. The parish church of the former Saint Laurent Parish shall be relegated to profane but not sordid use effective July 30, 2018. Should any interested party file a petition seeking recourse against this decree, the decree shall be held in abeyance until the final resolution of such petition.
2. Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish, in consultation with the Archdiocese of Hartford, shall dispose of the church building in a manner that accords with Catholic faith and morals and its dignity as a former place of Divine worship.
3. This decree is to be published to the pastor of Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish.
4. The substance of the decree is to be communicated to parishioners at the aforementioned parish, including by way of display in an appropriate place so that parishioners can read it as they enter or exit the churches. It will also be available on the website stewardsfortomorrow.org.
5. Canonical recourse may be made within the peremptory time limit of ten (10) business days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (*CIC* canon 1734 §2).

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, on the 9th day of July in the Year of Our Lord 2018.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor