



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

DECREE

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

This decree concerns the relegation to profane but not sordid use of Epiphany Church building in Cheshire, Connecticut

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, Saint Bridget, Saint Thomas Becket, and Epiphany Parishes of Cheshire, Connecticut, were merged on June 29, 2017, creating a new juridic entity subsumed under Saint Bridget of Sweden Parish, which absorbed the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of the three aforementioned parishes with the church buildings; and

WHEREAS, recourse was filed against this decree, which was subsequently addressed by the Congregation for the Clergy, and a decision was issued on October 10, 2017, rejecting the recourse and thus upholding the decree of May 2, 2017; and

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2019, the pastor of Saint Bridget of Sweden Parish, supported by the Parish Council, Finance Council, and trustees, and following consultation with the Parish community, requested by letter that the church building of the former Epiphany Parish be relegated to profane but not sordid use, and

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

WHEREAS, I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on January 28, 2019, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Epiphany Church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- To maintain the church building and premises would constitute a significant drain on the finances of the Parish and no alternate sources of funding are available;
- Epiphany Church is not being used for regular divine worship and the Parish still has two churches used for such, so the closure will not deprive the faithful of the right to worship;
- The strategic pastoral planning for the Archdiocese has required the consolidation of parishes and diminution of the number of churches, and so that our parishes are characterized by spiritual vitality, organizational efficacy and accountability, and social and financial responsibility;

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

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

Wherefore: Having carefully considered the law and the facts; having received a formal written request on January 18, 2019, from the Pastor and the Trustees with the support of the Parish Finance Council and Pastoral Council, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on January 28, 2019; having ensured by means of the original deeds and other documents as well as having heard from others that there are no donors and/or their heirs whose consent is needed to perform this juridic act, in accordance with the norm of canon 1222 §2; and having ensured that its altars, sacred objects, and religious artifacts will be removed from the church in accordance with canonical norms; and

WHEREFORE,


I, the undersigned Archbishop of Hartford, do pronounce, declare, and **DECREE** that the former parish church of Epiphany, located at 1750 Huckins Road, Cheshire, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective February 20, 2019. It shall no longer be a sacred place for divine worship, and herewith will lose its blessing, dedication, and consecration. It will no longer be used for divine worship.

This decree is to be published to the pastor of Saint Bridget of Sweden Parish. The substance of the decree is to be communicated to parishioners at the aforementioned parish, including by way of display in appropriate places so that parishioners can read it as they enter or exit the churches. It will also be available online on the *Catholic Transcript* and the stewardsfortomorrow.org websites.

Canonical recourse may be made within the peremptory time limit of ten (10) business days from the legitimate notification of the decree, 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 31st day of January in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor