



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

DE C R E E

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

*This decree concerns the relegation to profane but not sordid use of
Sacred Heart church building in Hartford, Connecticut*

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, Sacred Heart Parish of Hartford was subsumed into Saint Peter Parish on June 29, 2017; and Saint Peter Parish—with two church buildings—was then merged with Saint Lawrence O’Toole Parish in Hartford, by a decree of November 7, 2017, creating the new juridic entity named Maria Reina de la Paz Parish, which subsumed the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of Saint Peter and Saint Lawrence O’Toole with the church buildings; and

WHEREAS, recourse was filed against the decree merging Saint Peter and Saint Lawrence O’Toole Parishes, but as it was lodged outside the peremptory time period established by law it was rejected; and

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2019, the pastor of Maria Reina de la Paz Parish, supported by the trustees, Finance Council, and Parish Council, requested by letter that Sacred Heart church be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and

WHEREAS, the letter described the church building of Sacred Heart 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, I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on June 17, 2019, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Sacred Heart church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- Maria Reina de la Paz Parish cannot afford the cost of maintaining the facilities of Sacred Heart and related buildings;
- Sacred Heart church is not being used now for worship; as such, closure will not harm the good of souls;
- 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;

And WHEREAS, the Presbyteral Council voted unanimously to recommend that Sacred Heart 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 Maria Reina de la Paz 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 from the Pastor and the Trustees with the support of the Parish Finance Council and Parish Council, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on June 17, 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 Sacred Heart, located at 24 Ely Street, Hartford, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective July 29, 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 Maria Reina de la Paz 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 21st day of June in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford