



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

DECREE

In nomine Domini, Amen.

**DECREE OF DECONSECRATION AND RELEGATION
TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE OF
SAINT CLARE CHURCH IN EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, Saint Clare, Saint Vincent de Paul, and Our Lady of Pompeii Parishes of East Haven, Connecticut, were merged on June 29, 2017, creating the new juridic entity named Saint Pio of Pietrelcina Parish, which subsumed the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of the three aforementioned parishes with three church buildings; and

WHEREAS, no recourse was filed against this decree; and

WHEREAS, on September 12, 2018, the pastor of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina Parish, supported by the trustees, finance council, and parish advisory board, requested by letter that Saint Clare Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and

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

WHEREAS, I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on September 24, 2018, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Saint Clare Church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- Saint Pio of Pietrelcina Parish cannot afford the \$5,000 per month cost of maintaining the facilities of Saint Clare, while the Parish is already in significant debt, at around \$165,000;
- The Parish still has two churches used for divine worship and Saint Clare Church is only rarely used; as such, closure will not harm the good of souls;
- The number of parishioners has decreased;
- 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 Saint Clare 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 Pio of Pietrelcina 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 September 14, 2018, from the Pastor and the trustees with the support of the parish finance council, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on September 24, 2018; 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 Saint Clare, located at 234 Coe Avenue, East Haven, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective October 22, 2018. 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 Pio of Pietrelcina 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 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 2nd day of October in the Year of Our Lord 2018.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor