



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR  
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

**D E C R E E**

*In Nomine Domini. Amen.*

*This decree concerns the relegation to profane but not sordid use of Saint Peter church building in Hartford, Connecticut.*

WHEREAS, by my decree of November 7, 2017, Saint Lawrence O'Toole and Saint Peter Parishes of Hartford, Connecticut, were merged on December 3, 2017, with Saint Peter being subsumed into Saint Lawrence O'Toole, creating the new juridic entity named Maria Reina de la Paz Parish, which subsumed the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of the two aforementioned parishes with the church buildings; and

WHEREAS, the parishioners of the aforementioned parishes were notified of the substance of the merger decree, including via display in appropriate places during the weekend of November 11/12, 2017, and publication on the website [stewardsfortomorrow.org](http://stewardsfortomorrow.org);  
WHEREAS, recourse was filed against this decree on June 22, 2018, outside the peremptory time frame, and the recourse was thus rejected; and

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2018, the pastor of Maria Reina de la Paz Parish, supported by the trustees, Finance Council, and Parish Council, requested by letter that Saint Peter Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use, and that the building, including the rectory, and also a convent and school, be sold to an appropriate buyer for some other appropriate use; and

WHEREAS, the letter described the church building of Saint Peter 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 August 21, 2018, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Saint Peter Church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- The church building has serious structural problems, with repairs estimated at over \$1,000,000, and there are inadequate finances for such repairs, and it otherwise poses a risk to keep the building open and use it for divine worship;
- In addition to repairs, to generally maintain the church building and facilities poses a financial burden and would constitute a significant drain on the finances of Maria Reina de la Paz Parish;
- 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;

- Closure will not harm the good of souls.

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

WHEREAS, I have concluded that the economic hardship of repairing and maintaining the building and the risks posed by otherwise keeping the structurally unsound building open and using it for divine worship 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 August 6, 2018, from the Pastor and the Trustees with the support of the Parish Finance Council and Parish Council, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on August 21, 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 Peter, located at 160 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective October 8, 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 Maria Reina de la Paz Parish 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](http://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 28<sup>th</sup> day of August in the Year of Our Lord 2018.



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner  
Chancellor

  
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Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair  
Archbishop of Hartford