



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 Saint Elizabeth church building in Branford, Connecticut.*

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, Saint Elizabeth, Saint Therese, and Saint Mary Parishes of Branford, Connecticut, were merged on June 29, 2017, creating the new juridic entity named Saint John Bosco Parish, which subsumed the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of the three aforementioned parishes with the church buildings; and

WHEREAS, no recourse was filed against this decree; and

WHEREAS, on September 12, 2018, the pastor of Saint John Bosco Parish, supported by the trustees and Finance Council, and following consultation with the Parish community, requested by letter that Saint Elizabeth Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use, and indicated an intent to sell the church building, hall, and rectory; and

WHEREAS, the letter described the church building of Saint Elizabeth 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 September 24, 2018, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Saint Elizabeth Church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- To maintain the church building would constitute a significant drain on the finances of the Parish, especially considering other factors such as the Parish's need to subsidize a school;
- 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;
- The Parish still has two churches to use for divine worship and the closure will thus not harm the good of souls;
- The number of parishioners and thus also offertory contributions have decreased;

And WHEREAS, the Presbyteral Council voted unanimously to recommend that Saint Elizabeth 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 John Bosco 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 17, 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 Elizabeth, located at 65 Burban Drive, Branford, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective January 28, 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 John Bosco 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 7<sup>th</sup> day of January in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair  
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner  
Chancellor