



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

D E C R E E

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

**DECREE OF DECONSECRATION AND RELEGATION TO PROFANE BUT NOT
SORDID USE OF SAINT MARY CHURCH IN MERIDEN, CONNECTICUT**

WHEREAS, by my decree of May 2, 2017, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Saint Laurent, Saint Joseph, Saint Mary, and Holy Angels Parishes of Meriden, Connecticut, were merged on June 29, 2017, with Our Lady of Mount Carmel (renamed Our Lady Queen of Angels) subsuming the legal and equitable assets and liabilities of the other four parishes and their four church buildings; and

WHEREAS, no recourse was filed against this decree; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2019, the pastor of Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish, supported by the trustees, finance council, and parish council, requested by letter that the church of the former Saint Mary parish be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and

WHEREAS, the letter described the church building of Saint Mary as a financial burden due to the financial health of the Parish and operating costs associated with maintaining the church building and premises, while Saint Mary church is no longer being used at all for divine worship and there is an intent to sell the church building; and

WHEREAS, I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on April 29, 2019, for consultation on the question of the relegation of Saint Mary church to profane but not sordid use in light of the following facts:

- Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish cannot afford the cost of maintaining the facilities of Saint Mary and related buildings, especially in light of the fact there are still two other churches within the Parish to maintain (St. Laurent church was reduced to profane use on July 30, 2018);
- The Parish will still have three churches available for divine worship and Saint Mary 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 Saint Mary 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 Our Lady Queen of Angels 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 April 4, 2019, from the Pastor and the trustees with the support of the parish finance council, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on April 29, 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 Saint Mary, located at 97 Grove Street, Meriden, Connecticut, be relegated to profane but not sordid use (c.1222 §2), effective May 27, 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 Our Lady Queen of Angels 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 3rd day of May in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor