

DECREE

Relegation to Profane but Not Sordid Use Saint John the Apostle Church

Due to the deteriorating condition of Saint John the Apostle Church in Evansville, Indiana, and a lack of the necessary funding to repair and maintain the church, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient grave cause exists for the relegation of Saint John the Apostle Church to profane but not sordid use.

Whereas the administrator of Saints Mary and John Parish, in whose territory Saint John the Apostle Church is situated, wrote to me out of concern for the fiscal stability of Saints Mary and John Parish in order to request that Saint John the Apostle Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use;

Whereas the following reasons indicate that Saint John the Apostle Church, located at 617 Bellemeade Avenue, Evansville, Indiana, within the boundaries of Saints Mary and John Parish, is no longer able to be used for divine worship:

Whereas the structure of the church has deteriorated to the extent that major repairs are necessary, including, but not limited to: replacement of electrical wiring, removal of old plumbing with installation of new lines, and replacement of the roof which already has a history of significant leaking; such expense places a considerable financial strain on Saints Mary and John Parish;

Whereas Saints Mary and John Parish has previously merged by means of extinctive union on 1 July 2014 and on 27 April 2015, and has the care of two church buildings, namely, Saint Mary Church and Saint John the Apostle Church, as well as the former Holy Trinity Oratory, now relegated to profane but not sordid use, which places significant financial expense on the parish for maintenance and repairs of all edifices, giving rise to concern for the fiscal stability of the parish;

Whereas pastoral activity has been limited to one funeral since February of 2017, no marriages, and no weekday or weekend Masses; requests for occasional use of the church are rare, and other ongoing pastoral initiatives are lacking;

Whereas human resources to contribute to the upkeep of Saint John the Apostle Church have been found lacking;

Whereas following the administrator's consultation with the parishioners of Saints Mary and John Parish, including the parish pastoral council and the parish finance council as well as former parishioners of the previously merged Saint John the Apostle Parish, no interest was expressed in maintaining use of the church, particularly because the financial stability of Saints Mary and John Parish is jeopardized;

Whereas other reasonable sources of funding for the maintenance of Saint John the Apostle Church have been considered but found inadequate.

Having carefully considered the law and the facts; and

Having heard the administrator of Saints Mary and John Parish; and

Having consulted the Dean of the South Deanery; and

Having consulted the members of the Council of Priests and College of Consultors on 29 May 2018 regarding the question of the possible relegation to profane but not sordid use of Saint John the Apostle Church, and following discussion, no substantial objection to that proposal was offered; the Council of Priests and College of Consultors voted unanimously in favor of the proposal; and

Having ascertained by means of the original deeds and other documents as well as having heard from others that there are no major donors and/or their heirs who may have donated the church edifice and/or the land; and

Having determined that the good of souls will suffer no harm; the celebration of Mass and the sacraments are offered at Saints Mary and John Parish.

Therefore, in accord with canons 1212 and 1222 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, and having judged that sufficient grave cause is indeed present, I hereby decree the relegation of Saint John the Apostle Church to profane but not sordid use. Therefore, it is no longer a sacred place and has lost its blessing, dedication, and consecration; it may no longer be used for divine worship.

The care and upkeep of the former Saint John the Apostle Church, the property on which the former church sits and any improvements such as the rectory, parish office, and all other adjacent property remain as the financial responsibility of Saints Mary and John Parish.

Disbursements of any trust funds or foundations for the benefit of the former Saint John the Apostle Church are hereby transferred to Saints Mary and John Parish.

The provisions of this decree shall be effective on 6 August 2018, all things to the contrary notwithstanding. This decree is to be communicated to all interested persons. These provisions may be appealed according to the norm of law, canon 1734 §§1 and 2.

Given at Evansville, Indiana
20 July 2018

Most Reverend Joseph M. Siegel, DD, STL
Bishop of Evansville

Tim McGuire
Chancellor