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Prot. N. 2023 RPU-8

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

On April 8, 2021, following consultation with the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago, I issued a decree establishing a new parish through the extinctive union of three parishes in South Suburban Cook County: St. Ann Parish, Lansing, Illinois, St. John Parish, Glenwood, Illinois, and St. James Parish, Sauk Village, Illinois. The union was effective July 1, 2021, and the new parish was called, *ad interim*, SS. Ann, James, and John Parish. The extinctive union was challenged by recourse to the then Congregation for the Clergy and rejected by decree dated October 19, 2021. By my decree of October 28, 2021, the new parish was given the permanent name of All Souls Parish. By decree dated February 14, 2022, St. John Church, Glenwood, was relegated to profane but not sordid use (*CIC* c. 1222 §2).

On May 8, 2023, after consulting with the parish leadership, the Reverend Mark Kelema, pastor of the new All Souls Parish, discerned that continued use of St. James Church, Sauk Village, was no longer feasible. Consequently, he wrote to me and the Episcopal Vicar of his region of the archdiocese, asking that St. James Church of All Souls Parish also be relegated to profane but not sordid use (*CIC* c. 1222 §2).

A church may be relegated to profane but not sordid use when, after hearing the presbyteral council, the diocesan bishop determines there is a “grave cause” indicating a church should no longer be used for divine worship and that the good of souls suffers no detriment from the relegation. A Definitive Sentence of the College of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura given May 4, 1996, considered what constituted the grave causes required for the relegation to profane but not sordid use of a church belonging to a parish formed from the union of parishes (*Ministerium Iustitiae: Jurisprudence of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura*, Montreal: W & L (2011): Prot. N. 24388/93 CA, pp. 526-527).

As related in the Definitive Sentence, a new parish formed from the extinctive union of five parishes sought to relegate three of its five churches to profane but not sordid use. The faithful who worshipped at one of these churches took recourse against the relegation of their church. The Supreme Tribunal found that the following conditions together constituted the grave cause required for relegation: (1) preservation of all the churches would impose an intolerable burden on the new parish; (2) the church in question was no longer of service to the pastoral care of the faithful due to changed circumstances; (3) from the beginning, the new parish was burdened by a huge debt; (4) sale of the church would offer ready and effective assistance, otherwise lacking, to the urgent needs of the new parish; (5) the number of faithful



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contributing to the support of the parish was diminishing; and (6) charity and other assistance to the poor should not be neglected to preserve a sacred building.

In this case it is established that (1) Retaining St. James Church as a place of divine worship, imposes a financial burden on the new All Souls Parish due to operational and maintenance expenses associated with the church. If maintained for parish use, the St. James Church campus will require \$804,725.00 in capital repairs, \$672,000.00 for the church alone.

(2) St. James Church is not needed for divine worship for the 510 Sunday worshippers regularly attending Mass in All Souls Parish in FY 2023. All but 83 attended Sunday Mass at St. Ann Church. The parish celebrated their final regularly scheduled Sunday Masses at St. James Church on January 1, 2023. Parishioners now attending Mass in All Souls Parish are well accommodated in the 1,000-seat parish church of St. Ann, 6.4 miles from St. James Church.

(3) As of March 31, 2023, the total debt of the new All Souls Parish was \$5,391,239.00, all but \$25,274.00 of the debt accumulated at the former St. Ann Parish, Lansing. The most recent annual income from regular collections at All Souls Parish was \$550,504.00. Such an income is insufficient for the foreseeable needs of maintaining St. James Church alongside St. Ann Church, as well as for contribution to the support of the new parish.

(4) Sale or rental of St. James Church will benefit the mission of the new parish with ready cash proceeds. There will be immediate annual savings of at least \$90,000.00 from unspent regular maintenance expenses, and more from the \$804,725.00 in unspent capital repairs when the church campus is sold or leased.

(5) The total number of faithful regularly worshipping on Sundays at All Souls Parish was 510 in October 2022 (Fiscal Year 2023), only 83 of these were at St. James Church. In October 2022, the Sunday attendance at St. James was 32% less than the 122 in October 2021.

(6) Preserving St. James Church for worship will result in continued and unnecessary operational and maintenance costs that will cripple the ability of new All Souls Parish to serve the poor, enhance its evangelical mission, and remain viable.

It is unreasonable to expect a parish formed from the extinctive union of three parishes to maintain the churches it cannot afford and that are no longer needed for the divine worship of the new parish. Furthermore, there are no parochial, archdiocesan, or other known sources of funds available to keep and maintain St. James Church as a place of Catholic worship. There is no governmental assistance for building or maintaining churches in the United States of America. The reasonable course is to relegate St. James Church of All Souls Parish to profane but not sordid use, selling or developing the property for the benefit of the new parish, its ministries, and charity.




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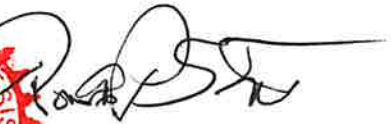

THEREFORE, know that I, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, according to the norms of the Code of Canon Law, convened the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago at the St. Giles Church campus of St. Catherine of Siena-St. Lucy and St. Giles Parish, Oak Park, Illinois, on May 9, 2023, and again on September 19, 2023. Hearing the council's deliberations and the council's September 19th vote of 23 yes and four against the proposal to relegate St. James Church of All Souls Parish to profane but not sordid use; invoking the Holy Spirit; and satisfying myself that the good of souls will suffer no detriment, and that the parish church of St. Ann is sufficient for the needs of the new parish.

I decree the following:

1. Effective immediately St. James Church (Sauk Village) of All Souls Parish in South Suburban Cook County, Illinois, is relegated to profane but not sordid use;
2. Officials of the Archdiocese of Chicago, cooperating with the pastor of the new All Souls Parish will assure the real property associated with the St. James Church campus is secure for the benefit of All Souls Parish;
3. If alienated, St. James Church is to provide All Souls Parish with proceeds from sale of the property or rental under lease;
4. The reports given to the Presbyteral Council on this matter, together with the minutes of the council meetings on May 9, 2023, and September 19, 2023, are confidential documents and will be appended to this decree upon approval and made available upon the request of eligible parties; and
5. Notification of this decree is to be made immediately through publication on the Archdiocesan Website. It is then to be sent to the pastor of All Souls Parish for communication to parishioners through the parish bulletin or other suitable means.

Given this 28th day of September, A.D. 2023.
From Holy Name Cathedral,
Chicago, Illinois


Archbishop of Chicago


 ARCHIDIOECESIS
CHICAGIENSIS
Ecclesiastical Notary

Enclosures



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Before hierarchical recourse (appeal) may be taken against this decree, a written, signed, and dated petition to reconsider or amend the decree must be sent by mail or delivered to the Archbishop of Chicago within ten (10) useful days from notification of the decree (CIC cc. 1734, 1735, 1737). The address is Office of the Archbishop, Archdiocese of Chicago, 835 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

ONCE APPROVED, CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS DECREE AND SUBMITTED TO THE PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS OF MAY 9, 2023, AND SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE UPON THE REQUEST OF ELIGIBLE PARTIES TO THE OFFICE FOR CANONICAL AFFAIRS