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Prot. N. 2023 RPU-4

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

On March 14, 2022, 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 neighboring parishes in far Southside of the City of Chicago: Holy Name of Mary Parish, SS. Peter and Paul Parish, and St. John de La Salle Parish. The union of the three parishes was called, *ad interim*, Holy Name of Mary, SS. Peter and Paul, and St. John de La Salle Parish. The effective date of the extinctive union was July 1, 2022. By my decree of October 13, 2022, the union of the three parishes was given the permanent new name of Our Lady of Kibeho Parish.

On September 19, 2022, after consulting with parish leadership, the Reverend Robert Gilbert, pastor of the then Holy Name of Mary, SS. Peter and Paul, and St. John de La Salle Parish, discerned that continued use of SS. Peter and Paul Church for divine worship in his parish was not feasible. Consequently, he wrote to me and the Episcopal Vicar of his region of the archdiocese, asking that SS. Peter and Paul Church of the now Our Lady of Kibeho Parish 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 a grave cause 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) the new parish was burdened from the beginning 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

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 SS. Peter and Paul Church as a place of divine worship, imposes a financial burden on the new Our Lady of Kibeho Parish due to operational and maintenance expenses associated with the church. If maintained for parish use, the SS. Peter and Paul Church campus will also require \$909,250.00.00 in capital repairs, \$674,000.00 for the church alone. As of August 31, 2022, the total debt of the new Our Lady of Kibeho Parish was \$3,480,514.00, alongside savings of \$86,904.00. \$506,259.00 of the debt originated in the former SS. Peter and Paul Parish.

(2) SS. Peter and Paul Church is not needed for divine worship for the average of 205 Sunday worshippers regularly attending there in FY 2020 (before COVID-19). The church has not been used for regular worship on Sundays since June 26, 2022. Moreover, the worshippers then attending SS. Peter and Paul Church are now well accommodated in the 500-seat parish church of Holy Name of Mary.

(3) The most recent pre-COVID-19 regular collections at the former SS. Peter and Paul Parish was \$117,215.00 (Fiscal Year 2020). An average annual income of approximately \$133,000.00 has been maintained over the last decade; however, such income has been insufficient for the ordinary maintenance of SS. Peter and Paul Church and leaves nothing for the regular support of the new Our Lady of Kibeho Parish.

(4) Sale or rental of SS. Peter and Paul Church will benefit the mission of the new parish with ready cash proceeds. There will be immediate annual savings of at least \$50,000.00 from unspent regular maintenance expenses, and more from the \$909,250.00 in unspent capital repairs when the church campus is sold.

(5) The total number of faithful regularly worshipping on Sundays at the former SS. Peter and Paul Parish was 205 in October 2019 (pre-COVID-19 Fiscal Year 2020). This figure is a 55% decline over 20 years from an attendance of 454 in October 2000.

(6) Preserving SS. Peter and Paul Church for worship will result in continued and unnecessary operational and maintenance costs that will cripple the ability of new Our Lady of Kibeho Parish to serve the poor, enhance its evangelical mission, and remain viable.

Since March 2020, the arrival of the novel coronavirus pandemic of COVID-19 diminished some segments of the United States economy, materially and negatively impacting the financial well-being of the archdiocese, the new parish, and many poor and middle-class families. There is concern for the long-term economic survival of many institutions.

It is unreasonable to expect a parish formed from the extinctive union of three parishes to maintain a church it cannot afford and that is 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 SS. Peter and Paul Church as a place of Catholic worship.

There is no governmental assistance for building or maintaining churches in the United States of America. The prudent course is to relegate SS. Peter and Paul Church of Our Lady of Kibeho Parish to profane but not sordid use, selling or developing the property for the benefit of the new parish, its ministries, and charity.

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 September 27, 2022, and again on November 4, 2022. Hearing the council's deliberations and the council's November 4th vote of 32 yes and none against the proposal to relegate SS. Peter and Paul Church of Our Lady of Kibeho Parish to profane but not sordid use; invoking the Holy Spirit; satisfying myself that the good of souls will suffer no detriment; and that the parish church of Holy Name of Mary is sufficient for the needs of the parish,

I decree the following:

1. Effective immediately, SS. Peter and Paul Church, on the far Southside of the City of Chicago, is relegated to profane but not sordid use;
2. Officials of the Archdiocese of Chicago, cooperating with the pastor of the new Our Lady of Kibeho Parish will assure the real property associated with the SS. Peter and Paul Church campus is secure for the benefit of Our Lady of Kibeho Parish;
3. If alienated, SS. Peter and Paul Church is to provide Our Lady of Kibeho 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 September 27, 2022, and November 4, 2022, 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 Our Lady of Kibeho Parish for communication to parishioners through the parish bulletin or other suitable means.

Given this 19th day of January, A.D. 2023.
From Holy Name Cathedral,
Chicago, Illinois


Archbishop of Chicago




Ecclesiastical Notary

Attachments

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 SEPTEMBER 27, 2022, and NOVEMBER 4, 2022, WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE UPON THE REQUEST OF ELIGIBLE PARTIES TO THE OFFICE FOR CANONICAL AFFAIRS