

MOST REVEREND DANIEL E. THOMAS
BISHOP OF TOLEDO

DECREE

ON THE REDUCTION OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, TOLEDO, OHIO TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

WHEREAS in June 1900, Most Reverend Ignatius Horstmann, then Bishop of Cleveland, erected Saint Michael the Archangel Parish which was completed in 1901. In 1910, this parish became part of the newly erected Diocese of Toledo;

WHEREAS Saint Michael the Archangel Parish originally cared for those residing in the current territorial boundaries of Saint John the Baptist Parish, Point Place. Given the amount of growth in the area, in or around 1914 Saint John the Baptist was established as a mission of Saint Michael the Archangel Parish. It then became a parish in 1918;

WHEREAS in 2005, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish and Saint John the Baptist Parish were twinned up until 2021 when Saint Michael the Archangel Parish returned to being a stand-alone parish with a Parochial Administrator;

WHEREAS in January 2026, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish was united with Saint John the Baptist Parish, Toledo, via an extinctive union-merger;

WHEREAS following upon the extinctive union-merger, the undersigned determines to relegate the church of Saint Michael the Archangel to profane but not sordid use because: (1) the operating expenses of Saint Michael the Archangel Church and the lack of adequate financial resources of Saint John the Baptist Parish, Toledo, to sustain it (2) the decline in Mass attendance, (3) the lack of adequate maintenance staff, (4) the depleting financial resources of the then Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, (5) the spiritual needs of the parish are currently being met at Saint John the Baptist,

(6) given the decline of priestly vocations and the excess number of churches in the diocese,
(7) there are no alternative methods of funding to continue to operate Saint Michael the Archangel Church;

WHEREAS where grave causes suggest that a church no longer be used for divine worship, the Diocesan Bishop, after having heard the Presbyteral Council, can relegate it to profane but not sordid use, with the consent of those who legitimately claim rights for themselves in the church and provided that the good of souls suffers no detriment hereby (cf. can. 1222 §2);

WHEREAS to assess the gravity of a cause, each case must be considered individually, weighing the whole context of the situation. At times, the gravity of a cause will arise only from a combination of just causes, each insufficient in itself, but which together manifest the seriousness of the situation (cf. Congregation for the Clergy, *Procedural Guidelines for the Modification of Parishes, the Closure or Relegation of Churches to Profane but not Sordid Use, and the Alienation of the Same*, April 30, 2013, Prot. No. 20131348);

WHEREAS having examined the facts of the present case, it has been well established that grave reasons required by canon 1222 §2 are present, even if some of the reasons invoked may not in themselves constitute a grave cause, however, when combined together they manifest the seriousness of the situation;

WHEREAS after a careful examination, it was established that no one is legitimately able to claim rights for themselves regarding Saint Michael the Archangel Church, understood primarily as patrimonial rights or those rights associated with patrimonial rights (cf. Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, Final Decree of the College of Judges, 21 November 1988, *Communicationes* 20 [1988] 93);

WHEREAS the undersigned convoked the Presbyteral Council on 17 September 2026 and presided over it according to the norm of law (cf. cann. 127 §1, 166 §1, and 500 §1), placing the relegation of the church of Saint Michael the Archangel on the agenda ahead of time, ensuring that a summary of its status was provided to the members of the Council (cf. can. 50), proposing the relegation, seeking the informed and free counsel of the members concerning the proposed modification (cf. can. 515 §2), listening to arguments either for or against the proposed relegation, and receiving unanimous support for the proposed relegation;

Therefore, the undersigned Bishop of Toledo, after prayerful consideration, having weighed all of the reasons and after having heard the Presbyteral Council, hereby issues the following


DECREE

1. The church of Saint Michael the Archangel in the Parish of Saint John the Baptist Parish, Toledo, is hereby reduced to profane but not sordid use according to the prescripts of canon 1222, §2 for the grave causes heretofore mentioned.
2. All sacred objects are to be removed in accord with the diocesan policy regarding such matters. Altars may never be relegated to profane but not sordid use, thus, if they cannot be removed, they must be destroyed (cf. cann. 1212 and 1238).

This decree is effective on 1 May 2026 (cf. can. 54 §1). Within the preemphory period of ten useful days from the legitimate notification of this decree, the faithful may seek in writing from its author the revocation or emendation of this decree before proposing hierarchical recourse (cf. can. 1734 §§1-2).

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Toledo on this twenty-third day of April in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-six.


Sister Rose Marie Timmer, RSM
Chancellor


Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas
Bishop of Toledo