



October 14, 2023

Dear Parish Family,

Our facilities process has weighed heavily on many hearts, including mine, and this is a difficult announcement to make. I pray that we will join together as the living stones of Epiphany of the Lord, fixed on the Living Stone of Jesus, relying on the love and mercy of His Sacred Heart to bring healing, comfort, and unity to our parish family. I pray that the Lord will help us be sensitive, welcoming, and open to one another, especially our brothers and sisters in our parish family who may be hurting the most. May we all take refuge together in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Included with this week's bulletin is a recently signed decree of Bishop Daniel Thomas regarding the relegation of the church of Sacred Heart, as well as a decree relegating the church of Good Shepherd. As you know, each Catholic church is consecrated (blessed) when it is dedicated. When a "Decree of Relegation" is issued for a church, the building formally loses its consecration and it can no longer be used for divine worship. According to canon law, this allows for the possibility of the building to be sold or razed. We do plan, however, to maintain our current Mass schedule utilizing Sacred Heart Church through the month of December.

The wording of the decrees "to profane but not sordid use" means that the church buildings may not be used in a way that would be opposed to Church teaching or in some manner that is contrary to its dignity as a place where the Sacraments were previously celebrated. In consultation with the Facilities and Mission Task Force, Finance Council, and Pastoral Council, we have no plans to sell the building for profane use. We cannot continue to maintain the building, so razing the Sacred Heart church building allows for closure. The responsibility of taking care of Good Shepherd Church falls upon the diocese.

Because canon law requires that these decrees be made public to our parish, they will be published for two consecutive weekends in our bulletin and on our parish website and social media. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to ask me. Let us pray for one another and fix our eyes on the Living Stone of our merciful and loving Lord Jesus.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Father Eric".

Father Eric Mueller

