



## DECREE

### RELEGATION OF A CHURCH

The parish named *The Church of Saint Austin in Minneapolis* merged with the parish named *The Church of Saint Bridget in Minneapolis* on January 1, 2012, with the newly merged parish named *The Church of Saint Bridget*. Since that time, the parish has utilized both the Church of Saint Austin and the Church of Saint Bridget for divine worship.

In 2018, leadership of the parish of Saint Bridget assessed the needs of the parish and determined that the closure and sale of one of the two parish campuses, including the church located on the site, would be necessary in order to secure the stability and viability of the parish. This determination was supported through a discernment process in which parishioners expressed a need to consolidate operations for the sake of building a sustainable parish mission that is not divided by two locations and separate identities within the community. The parish is also operating at a significant financial deficit annually, which is not sustainable. The parish has not been able to raise adequate funds to support its ministries and both campuses, which threatens the viability of the parish overall.

After broad consultation with parishioners, the parish finance council, and the parish pastoral council, in January 2019, the parochial administrator submitted a request for the Church of Saint Austin and the surrounding campus to be closed and sold. At that time, the parish began celebrating all Sunday Masses at the Church of Saint Bridget, while using the Church of Saint Austin occasionally upon request, such as for funerals. On May 7, 2019, the Archbishop presented the request for relegation of the Church of Saint Austin to the Presbyteral Council for discussion and consultation.

NOW THEREFORE, having received the request from the parish of Saint Bridget for permission to permanently close and sell the Church of Saint Austin;

Considering that the number of those attending Mass and participating in parish life reveals that there is no physical need for a second church to be operated by the parish; and given the Church of Saint Bridget is located only .4 miles from the site of the Church of Saint Austin, and that other parish churches, Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Victory, are located 1.3 and 2.3 miles away from Saint Austin, respectively; and

Having determined that the parish has presented grave causes requiring that St. Austin church no longer to be used for divine worship (c. 1222 §2), namely, the lack of financial resources to secure the financial viability of the parish and the need to reduce unsustainable

expenses so that the parish would no longer operate at an annual deficit, resulting in the financial impossibility of sustaining the operations and maintenance of the church building; and

Noting that no other reasonable or adequate sources of funding or financial assistance have been identified that would obviate the need for the sale of the edifice; and

Judging that the good of souls will not suffer detriment, since the overwhelming majority of parishioners have already transitioned to the use of the Church of Saint Bridget or have already dispersed to neighboring parishes since the merger (cf. c. 1222 §2); and

Having consulted the Presbyteral Council (c. 1222 §2), and having heard those also concerned (c. 50);

I, the undersigned Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, hereby determine that the

**CHURCH OF SAINT AUSTIN**

Located at 4050 Upton Ave North in Minneapolis is to be relegated to secular use, effective at the end of the day on August 17, 2019.

The sacred items are to be carefully inventoried and suitable disposition made for each, with as many of the items being incorporated into the Church of Saint Bridget as possible.

This decree is to be notified to the parishioners of the parish of Saint Bridget without delay. A party aggrieved by this decision may petition for revocation or emendation within the preemphory time limit of ten (10) days of the notification of this decree (c. 1732 §2). All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Saint Paul, Minnesota, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of August in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Susan Mulheron  
Chancellor for Canonical Affairs



Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda  
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

L.S.

