



2.8.2020

**Status changes for St. Adrian Martyr Church in Delancey**

The Rev. Msgr. Joseph Riccardo, pastor of Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish in Punxsutawney, announced on Feb. 8 that the Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico, bishop of Erie, after consultation with the presbyteral council, has relegated one of the remaining two secondary churches of Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish — St. Adrian Martyr Church (hereafter referred to as St. Adrian) — to “profane but not sordid use,” effective February 16, 2020.

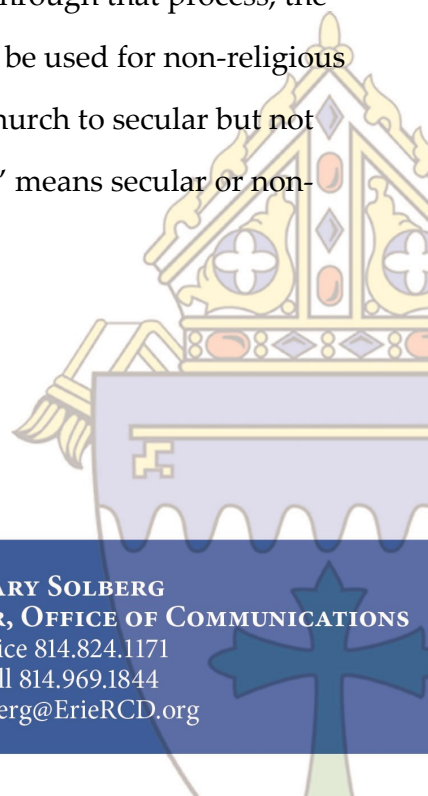
St. Adrian is the second mission church of Ss. Cosmas and Damian to be relegated in the past month. St. Joseph Husband of Mary Church in Anita officially closed Jan. 26.

The technical designation of relegating a church refers to the canon law process by which a bishop removes the blessing or consecration of a church building. Through that process, the building ceases to be reserved for divine worship, and, therefore, can be used for non-religious purposes. The same process is described in England as “reducing a church to secular but not unbecoming use.” This language helps clarify that the term “profane” means secular or non-religious, while “sordid” means unbecoming or inappropriate.

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**ANNE-MARIE WELSH**  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS  
Office 814.824.1167  
Cell 814.746.6889  
[amwelsh@ErieRCD.org](mailto:amwelsh@ErieRCD.org)

**MARY SOLBERG**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS  
Office 814.824.1171  
Cell 814.969.1844  
[msolberg@ErieRCD.org](mailto:msolberg@ErieRCD.org)



The designation is the result of a process that occurs when a pastor, with the support of the parish finance council and the parish pastoral council, believes a church building can no longer be maintained for any of a variety of reasons, and asks the bishop to remove the building's blessing.

A complete history of St. Adrian, as well as a detailed narrative of the current situation, is described in the decree announcing the bishop's decision, now available at [www.ErieRCD.org/bishop/decrees.html](http://www.ErieRCD.org/bishop/decrees.html).

On July 1, 2010, Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish took over responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of four church edifices: the parish church of Ss. Cosmas and Damian as well as the three mission churches of St. Adrian in Delancey, St. Anthony of Padua in Walston, and St. Joseph in Anita.

Regular Sunday Masses have not been celebrated at St. Adrian since 2006.

With the closure of St. Adrian Church, St. Anthony of Padua will be the only remaining secondary church of Ss. Cosmas and Damian.

The pastoral planning process involving parishes that was completed in 2017 in the Diocese of Erie was designed to allow parishes to evaluate their own situations going forward, and to make recommendations at the local level.

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