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Relegation of Holy Family Church in Erie

Reverend Jason A. Glover, pastor of both Our Mother of Sorrows and Saint Stanislaus parishes of Erie, announced on Dec. 7 that The Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico, bishop of Erie, after consultation with the Presbyteral Council, has accepted his request to relegate Holy Family Parish to “profane but not sordid use.” The technical designation refers to the canon law process by which a bishop removes the blessing or consecration of a church building. The building then ceases to be reserved for divine worship and therefore can be used for non-religious purposes.

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

Recognizing the church building to be in very poor physical condition and the financial burden impacting Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, the Reverend Jason A. Glover, with the unanimous support of the parish finance council and the parish pastoral council, petitioned the bishop to request that Holy Family Church be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

Holy Family Parish was divided from Saint Stanislaus Parish in 1907 to serve Slovak families living in the lower east side of Erie. The current church, the second one built for the parish, was completed in 1942. In 1990, Holy Family was partnered with the neighboring eastside parishes of Saint Ann and Saint Casimir.

— more —

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In 2017, as part of diocesan-wide parish restructuring, Saint Casimir was named the parish church of Our Mother of Sorrows. Holy Family church was named a secondary church without mission status, meaning that Mass was no longer celebrated there on Sundays and other holy days of obligation.

There is an active offer to buy the entire Holy Family complex. Our Mother of Sorrows has been in long-term negotiations with the R.B. Wiley Charter School. The charter school is interested in buying the church along with the other buildings – an opportunity for the abandoned complex to be rehabilitated and put back into good use.

A complete history of the church, 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.

The decree is effective December 29, 2025.

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