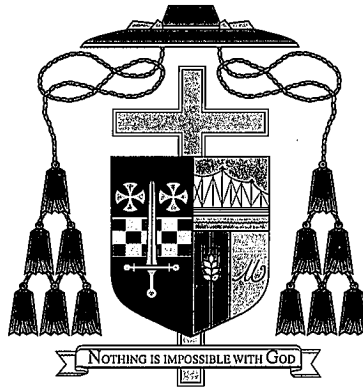


DAVID ALLEN ZUBIK



By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See

BISHOP OF PITTSBURGH

DECREE

CLOSING FOR WORSHIP OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH BUILDING,
CALIFORNIA, PENNSYLVANIA
AND THE REDUCTION OF THE SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH
BUILDING OF SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL PARISH
TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE.

Whereas, the church of Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish located at 409 Union Street, California, Pennsylvania 15419 became part of the patrimony of the newly formed Saint Katharine Drexel Parish with a decree issued on November 26, 2016 and effective on January 8, 2017 in accord with the norm of canon 122 §2.

Whereas, Saint Katharine Drexel Parish was formed by the extinctive union of Saint Agnes Parish, Ave Maria Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, Saint Oliver Plunkett Parish and Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish.

Whereas, the parish of Saint Katharine Drexel is facing critical financial difficulties that include deficit spending of over \$146,000 over the past two (2) years and a large sum of debt owed by the parish.

Whereas, the physical condition and maintenance of parish-owned buildings, including church buildings, has become a grave threat to the very existence of the parish.

Whereas, a total of five (5) parish assemblies were held on November 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15, 2018, to receive parishioner input regarding the possible closure of church buildings and, if churches would need to close, to receive input on which church buildings would best serve the needs of the parish.

Whereas, on November 30, 2018, the Pastor of Saint Katharine Drexel Parish, with the recommendation of his parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, submitted a petition recommending

the relegation to profane but not sordid use of the Saint Thomas Aquinas church building in California, Pennsylvania.

Whereas, the care of souls will be provided for through the use of the Ave Maria church building, Bentleyville, Pennsylvania and the Saint Agnes church building, Richeyville, Pennsylvania.

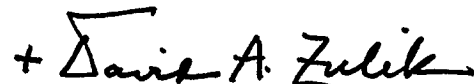
Whereas, the rationale for closing the Saint Thomas Aquinas church building for divine worship include the following: (1) the critical financial situation of the parish, including deficit spending and great debt owed by the parish; (2) the grave need to reduce costs for the financial viability of the parish; (3) the expected required maintenance that this church building will need in the future; (4) there is no other viable source of income to maintain the church; (5) the care of souls will not be greatly impacted because of the availability of other churches owned by the parish.

Therefore, having heard the Priest Council on January 14, 2019 and the Vicars General on the same day and having received a unanimous favorable recommendation from both and in accord with the provisions of canon 1222 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, I hereby close for worship the Saint Thomas Aquinas church building located at 409 Union Street, California, Pennsylvania and furthermore relegate to profane but not sordid use the same church building in accord with the norms of law.

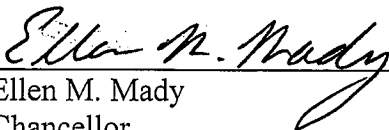
In accordance with our diocesan norms, I also decree that the stained glass windows, sacred items, non-sacred artifacts and any work of some significance be removed to the extent possible for reuse in other sacred edifices in the parish or be transmitted to the Diocesan Archives for use by other ecclesiastical entities. This decree is effective at 12:01 AM on Monday, March 4, 2019.

Finally, those who have the right, may appeal this decree in accordance with the prescriptions of the law.

Given at Pittsburgh this 1st day of February in the Year of Our Lord 2019.



Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh



Ellen M. Mady
Chancellor