

## DECREE

### Alienation of Church Property: Seventeen Acres of Farmland

Due to reasons of financial stability and security as well as proper funding of diocesan ministries, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient just cause exists for the alienation of Church property, namely, approximately seventeen acres of farmland located in Vincennes, owned by the Diocese of Evansville.

Whereas I, as the Bishop of Evansville, have concern for the fiscal stability and security of the Diocese of Evansville as well as the proper funding of diocesan ministries in order to consider that the seventeen acres of farmland be alienated;

Whereas the following reasons indicate that the seventeen acres of farmland, situated on Main Street in Vincennes, may be alienated:

Whereas the Diocese of Evansville is the lessor of the seventeen acres of farmland which is a portion of a larger area of farmland and thereby expends diocesan human resources through supervision of this property, giving rise to concern for prudent stewardship;

Whereas the Diocese of Evansville has no need for the seventeen acres of farmland which creates expenditure of human resources and restricts diocesan funds from better use in fostering ministerial endeavors; and

Whereas other reasonable sources of funding of diocesan ministries and human resources have been considered but found inadequate.

Furthermore, charity and other assistance to be bestowed on the poor as well as proper funding of diocesan ministries cannot be neglected in order to preserve seventeen acres of unnecessary farmland.

Wherefore:

Having carefully considered the law and the facts; and

Having sought and obtained the written appraisals of experts who have provided the financial value of the property, in accord with canon 1293 §1, 2°; and

Having examined and accepted the experts' estimates of the value of the property, and finding that the estimated value of the property lies above the minimum amount established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for the valid alienation of goods which constitute the stable patrimony of those public juridic persons subject to my episcopal authority, according to the norm of canon 1292 §1; and

Having consulted the members of the Council of Priests on 21 March 2024 in accord with the norm of canons 127 §1, §2, 2°, and §3, and 1292 §4, and following discussion, no substantial objection to that proposal was offered; the Council of Priests voted unanimously in favor of the proposal; and

Having consulted and obtained the consent of the College of Consultors on 21 March 2024 in accord with the norm of canons 127 §1, §2, 1°, and §3, and 1292 §§1 and 4, and following discussion, no substantial objection to that proposal was offered; the College of Consultors voted unanimously in favor of the proposal; and

Having consulted and obtained the consent of the Diocesan Finance Council on 29 February 2024 in accord with canons 127 §1, §2, 1°, and §3, and 1292 §§1 and 4, and following discussion, no substantial objection to that proposal was offered; the Diocesan Finance Council voted unanimously in favor of the proposal; and

Having ascertained by means of the original deeds and other documents as well as having heard from others that there are no major donors and/or their heirs whose consent is needed to place this juridic act in accord with canon 1292 §1; and

Having ensured that the alienation will be valid civilly; and

Having ensured that no harm shall come to the Church by the alienation of the property inasmuch as the proposed sale has been given a certain amount of publicity, the purchaser has the funds or the collateral to secure the payment, and the documents of the proposed sale have stipulations and restrictions inserted in them that the property may only be used for profane but not sordid use; and

Having ensured that there is no reasonable possibility of scandal or loss of the faithful resulting from the proposed alienation; and

Having ensured that the lessee of the seventeen acres of farmland receives consideration and timely notification; and

Having determined that the good of souls will suffer no harm thereby;


Therefore, in accord with canons 1290, 1291, and 1292 §1 of the *Code of Canon Law*, and having judged that sufficient just cause is indeed present, I hereby decree the alienation of the seventeen acres of farmland located in Vincennes.

In keeping with the prescripts of canon 1294 §1, the aforesaid property cannot be alienated below its appraised value provided by the experts.

In accord with the prescripts of canon 1294 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, the income resulting from the alienation of the aforesaid property must be invested carefully for the advantage of the Church or expended prudently according to the purposes of the alienation.

The provisions of this decree are to take effect on 8 April 2024, all things to the contrary notwithstanding. This decree is to be communicated to all interested persons. These provisions may be appealed according to the norm of canon 1734 §§1 and 2.

Given at Evansville, Indiana  
21 March 2024

  
Most Reverend Joseph M. Siegel, DD, STL  
Bishop of Evansville

  
Dean Happe  
Chancellor

