



DECREE

Alienation of Church Property: House and Related Land Our Lady of Hope Parish

Due to reasons of financial stability and security, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient just cause exists for the alienation of Church property, namely, a house and related tract of land located within the boundaries of Our Lady of Hope Parish.

Whereas the pastor of Our Lady of Hope Parish, in whose territory the house and related land are situated, wrote to me out of concern for the fiscal stability and security of Our Lady of Hope Parish in order to request that the house and related land be alienated;

Whereas the following reasons indicate that the house and related land which are located at 908 New Street, Washington, Indiana, within the boundaries of Our Lady of Hope Parish, may be alienated:

Whereas Our Lady of Hope Parish has significant financial expense for the maintenance and repairs of the church, school, related buildings, and grounds, giving rise to concern for the fiscal stability of Our Lady of Hope Parish;

Whereas the vacant house and related land are sources of significant financial expense, maintenance, and upkeep for the parish as well as expense arising from deferred maintenance;

Whereas the house and related land were acquired through a bequest, and the intention of the donor was that the property should benefit Our Lady of Hope Parish by means of income from its sale;

Whereas Our Lady of Hope Parish has no need for a vacant house and its related land which creates additional expense for the parish;

Whereas following the pastor's consultation with the parishioners of Our Lady of Hope Parish, as well as the parish pastoral council and the parish finance council, no interest was expressed in maintaining the house and related land, particularly because financial stability concerns exist; and

Whereas other reasonable sources of funding have been considered but found inadequate.

Furthermore, charity and other assistance to be bestowed on the poor cannot be neglected in order to preserve an unneeded vacant house and related land.

Wherefore:

Having carefully considered the law and the facts; and

Having heard the pastor of Our Lady of Hope Parish; 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 below 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 15 August 2023 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 the Diocesan Finance Council on 21 September 2023 in accord with canons 127 §1, §2, 2°, and §3, and 1292 §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 determined that the good of souls will suffer no harm thereby;

Therefore, in accord with canons 1290 and 1291 of the *Code of Canon Law*, and having judged that sufficient just cause is indeed present, I hereby decree the alienation of the house and related land, located within the boundaries of Our Lady of Hope Parish.

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 23 October 2023, 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
6 October 2023



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



Dean Happe
Chancellor

