

Two Chapels in East Baltimore to Close

Two Southeast Baltimore Catholic chapels, established by Highlandtown's Sacred Heart of Jesus parish during World War II to serve a bulging Catholic population employed in nearby industries, will close on January 27, 2002.

Holy Redeemer Chapel, at 800 South Oldham Street and Saint Gerard Chapel, at Charlotte & Cardiff Avenues responded to the needs of a robust local Catholic population that surged during the wartime expansion in local industry. Founded and shepherded by Redemptorist priests and brothers, the chapels are an outreach of Sacred Heart of Jesus parish, also founded by and under the care of the Redemptorists since it was established in the 19th century.

The Redemptorists recently informed the Archdiocese that they would no longer be able to provide priests to celebrate Mass at the chapels, where services had been reduced for some time to one Mass per week at each facility. Similar priest personnel concerns would make substituting Redemptorist priests with Archdiocesan priests an unsustainable situation. Other stopgap measures, such as engaging a priest on contract stipend to celebrate Mass are not acceptable long-term solutions.

Approximately 100 people currently attend the weekly Sunday Mass at each of the chapels. The Very Reverend George J. Keaveney, C.S.S.R, provincial of the Redemptorists who are headquartered in New York, addressed the faithful of the two chapels on Monday, December 10, 2001, inviting them, as the chapels close, to become direct members of Sacred Heart of Jesus parish.

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