



Decree

Relegating Our Lady of Pompei Church, Baltimore City Our Lady of Fatima Parish To Profane But Not Sordid Use

History

Our Lady of Pompei Parish was erected in 1923 and originally pastored by Father Luigi Scialdone, C.M., to serve the Italian community of the area. Masses were held in the basement of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church until the present church was built. The first Mass was held on the first Sunday in June 1924. The parish eventually featured an elementary and a high school. In 1997, the schools were absorbed into the Southeast Baltimore Catholic Academy. In 2002, the high school was moved to the vacant Holy Rosary Parish school building. In 2004, the parish elementary school became an Archdiocesan school and was renamed Archbishop Borders Elementary School, as it was combined with the school from St. Elizabeth of Hungary. The current church seats 224 persons.

Current Situation

The church became a secondary edifice on December 1, 2024, after the extinctive merger of Our Lady of Pompei Parish into Our Lady of Fatima Parish. The last regularly scheduled Sunday Mass at the church was celebrated on November 24, 2024. Since the merger with Our Lady of Fatima Parish, the church has been used for one baptism, one wedding, and one funeral. In October 2025, the pastor and the parish leadership determined that it was appropriate to seek permission to alienate the property and reduce the church to profane use, given the limited available assets of the parish and the financial challenge of caring for Our Lady of Pompei Church. The pastor's and pastoral leadership's concerns are based on the financial realities outlined below.

Even before Our Lady of Pompei Parish's extinctive merger, the former parish had struggled to pay for its upkeep and maintenance, given the small number of parishioners. The current deferred maintenance costs for the church and attached rectory are \$232,780. To fund fully this and future needed work requires an annual investment of \$175,742. In addition to the church, Our Lady of Pompei Campus also includes a convent with attached gymnasium/multi-purpose space. The total deferred maintenance for all structures on the campus is \$409,851, requiring an annual investment of \$314,636 for this and future needed work. In addition, Our Lady of Pompei Campus incurs \$91,601 in annual carrying costs (those independent of the staffing or use of the church, e.g., insurance and utilities).

Our Lady of Fatima Parish Campus, which consists of the parish church (integrated into a school building with convent and hall) and a separate rectory, has \$1,488,376 in current deferred maintenance needs, requiring an annual investment of \$787,281 for this and other future needed work. The campus incurs annual carrying costs of \$384,134.

Our Lady of Fatima has an anticipated offertory income for the current fiscal year of \$418,311. Even with a hoped-for increase in offertory and other income as the merged parishes come together and grow, Our Lady of Fatima has insufficient financial resources to properly support the physical-plant needs of Our Lady of Pompei Church.

It was hoped that the merger of Our Lady of Pompei Parish with Our Lady of Fatima Parish would result in better financial health for the parish, but the financial challenges have continued. Thus, Our Lady of Fatima Parish does not have the financial ability to support an additional church in a manner suitable for the worthy celebration of the sacraments. The attempt to do so is impeding the parish's ability to support other pastoral needs and outreach. The financial strain is depriving other church campuses from receiving proper support and restricting pastoral programs of their necessary resources, thereby harming the overall apostolate of the parish.

The current parish church, Our Lady of Fatima Church, is 1.9 miles (3.1 kilometers) from Our Lady of Pompei Church.

According to the law, in order to relegate a church to profane use or even to close it permanently, it is necessary that there be some grave reason(s) suggesting that the church no longer be used for divine worship. Often the gravity of the cause becomes evident when a number of factors are considered together. Can. 1222 §2 states:

Where other grave causes suggest that a church no longer be used for divine worship, the diocesan bishop, after having heard the presbyteral council, can relegate it to profane but not sordid use, with the consent of those who legitimately claim rights for

themselves in the church, and provided that the good of souls suffers no detriment thereby.

The pastor and parish leadership held meetings and discussions regarding the potential future of the church before the submission of their request to reduce the church to profane but not sordid use to allow for the marketing and potential alienation of the property. Being the only person who can legitimately claim rights concerning the church edifice, the pastor has given his consent (cf. can. 1222 §2).

The pastor attests that the relegation of Our Lady of Pompei Church will not result in any harm to the good of souls (cf. can. 1222 §2).

In accordance with the requirements of canon 1222 §2, the Presbyteral Council carefully considered the proposal to reduce Our Lady of Pompei Church to profane use at their regularly scheduled meeting on November 18, 2025. Members received pertinent information regarding this request prior to the meeting. After carefully considering the facts of the matter, the members voted unanimously to recommend that the Archbishop of Baltimore approve the request given the financial situation in the parish.

All the requirements of canons 50, 51, 127, 166, and 515 have been fulfilled.

Therefore, having first and foremost before me the best possible means to provide for the care of souls for the faithful of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, while considering that:

- Our Lady of Pompei Church no longer serves as a parish church;
- Our Lady of Pompei Campus requires annual expenditure (investment for deferred maintenance and carrying costs) of \$406,237 by Our Lady of Fatima Parish;
- Regularly scheduled Masses ceased at the parish in November of 2024;
- Maintenance of an additional church has placed an unsustainable financial burden on Our Lady of Fatima Parish;
- The parish lacks the financial means to maintain and provide for the proper upkeep of Our Lady of Pompei Church since its income is insufficient to continue supporting the church in a manner befitting a Catholic place of worship;
- There is no pastoral need for the church edifice in this parish, given the availability of another church within its boundaries and the number of parishioners;
- The pastor and members of the parish leadership have petitioned for the relegation of the church; and,
- There does not appear to be any probable detriment to the good of souls.

I do hereby judge based on the aforementioned reasons, considered cumulatively, that they constitute the grave cause required by the law (cf. can. 1222 §2) for the relegation of the church to profane but not sordid use, and I hereby decree the following:

Our Lady of Pompei Church of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Baltimore is to be relegated to profane but not sordid use, according to the norm of can. 1222 §2. Relegation will occur as of the date of this decree. At that time, it will herewith lose its blessing and consecration. It will no longer be used for divine worship.

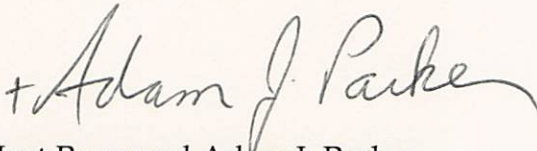
I also decree that prior to the final alienation of this property that the altar, sacred objects, and religious artifacts are to be removed from the church in accordance with the law.

This decree is to be promulgated immediately and will take effect as noted above, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. It is to be communicated to the pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, who is to inform the parishioners regarding this decree. It may be challenged within the peremptory time limit of ten days in accordance with the norm of law (canon 1734 §2).

Given at the Chancery in Baltimore, Maryland, on this 29th day of May, 2026.



Most Reverend William E. Lori, S.T.D.
Archbishop of Baltimore



Most Reverend Adam J. Parker
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

