



**MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.**  
CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* JACKSON

**Decree Relegating  
St. Mary Church, Jackson Mississippi  
To Profane but Not Sordid Use**

*In nomine Domini. Amen*

Having gratefully appreciated that Bishop Richard Gerow called forth the Catholic community of what became St. Mary Church in West Jackson on July of 1948 and defined the parish boundaries by August of 1948; celebrate with what is recorded as St. Mary Church the dedication of its gothic church and multi dwelling rectory on October 25, 1955. History records that ministry at St. Mary Church flourished in a period when the area was thriving;

Having received from Reverend Ricardo Phipps pastor of St. Mary Church in Jackson, Mississippi, a series of thorough studies that began in 2012 and updated by further in-depth studies to date concerning the viability of the structural integrity of St. Mary church, I consulted with Rev. Phipps, Diocesan Officials, St. Mary Church's Pastoral Council, Finance Council and members of the parish that live within and outside of the parish's territory that consider themselves registered members of the parish;

Having heard from Rev. Phipps about initial safety and structural integrity issues with St. Mary church building had lead to further meetings and extensive examination into the viability and sustainability of the physical building.

Having heard from Rev. Phipps and the 96 registered people in St. Mary's parish of whom less than 20 families live within the territory;

Having considered the grave reasons proposed for the relegation of St. Mary Church to profane but not sordid use (cc. 50; 1222 §2) and ensured that the spiritual good of the faithful would be properly and sufficiently provided for, that the good of souls would suffer no detriment, and that the necessary information has been sought from anyone who legitimately claimed rights for themselves in the church (cc. 1222 §2; 1267 §1; 1300);

Having carefully considered the reports regarding the present severely compromised condition of the church building from two structural engineers, electrical engineer and waterproofing engineer;


Having heard from Msgr. Elvin Sunds, Vicar General and Vicar for Priests, and Aad de Lange, Diocesan Director of Administration and Finance, regarding the assets and the impossibility of other sources of revenue that might be used for repair and maintaining the church building;

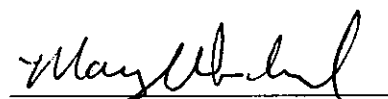
Having presented all this information to the Diocesan Presbyteral Council on January 13, 2015, and having unanimous consent from the Council regarding the relegation of St. Mary Church to profane but not sordid use, in accord with the norm of law (cc. 127 §1; 166; 1222 §2).

I hereby decree, in accord with c. 1222 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, that St. Mary Church in Jackson, Mississippi be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This decree is to be notified to the pastor and to the faithful of the parish. A petition for revocation or emendation of this decree is subject to the applicable canons (*CIC*, cc. 1732-1739).

Given at the Chancery Office of the Diocese of Jackson in Jackson, Mississippi and effective from this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of February 2015.

  
Most Reverend Joseph R. Kopacz, DD  
Bishop of Jackson

  
Mary Woodward  
Chancellor

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