

Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Providence  
One Cathedral Square  
Providence, RI 02903  
Phone: (401) 278-4546

## **DECREE**

### **IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.**

Since its solemn dedication in 1957, St. Aloysius Gonzaga Church has functioned as a spiritual home for generations of families and for the celebration of the sacraments in the Social neighborhood of Woonsocket: first, for the parishioners of St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish, Woonsocket, and since 2007, as the church building of the newly-formed All Saints Parish, Woonsocket. In recent years, the gradual decrease in parishioners has resulted in diminished parish income. At the same time, normal parish operating costs have continued to escalate, resulting in deferred maintenance on the church structure. The parish administrator of All Saints Parish and the Diocese of Providence have identified factors that, taken together, clearly support the case that the situation regarding the church building has become increasingly tenuous and evident. Decades of deferred maintenance are bringing significant capital needs for the church building. In its most recent inspection report, Abcore Restoration Company documented several issues confronting the church building, including: water damage (leading to significant plaster damage throughout the upper and lower church, sacristy, choir loft, and north-side church entrance); drainage issues throughout the church building; and deteriorating mortar, which has resulted in the compromise of the large, granite capstones on the church facade. Abcore has determined that the only way to seal the church building from additional, damaging leaks is to replace the church roof, repoint the church's exterior, and replace the church gutters and downspouts. Estimated costs for these necessary long-term projects total \$1.32 million, and the sum of these plus other recommended projects totals approximately \$2.3 million. The church building is becoming a health- and safety-hazard, but the staggering expenses to meet these physical needs of the church have reached a point where further consideration of necessary, long-term repairs and renovations would be financially imprudent.

For these reasons, in their letter of November 17, 2021, the parish administrator, parish trustees, and parish finance council of All Saints recommended that I permanently close the church building.

Therefore, at the request of the parish administrator, trustees, and finance council of All Saints Parish; having determined that several factors are present; having heard those affected by the request; having heard the College of Consultors on December 7, 2021 and the Council of Priests on December 7, 2021 as required by Canons 1222, §2, and 515, §2; I hereby decree that:

1. The St. Aloysius Gonzaga church building (All Saints Parish), Woonsocket, is relegated from sacred to secular (but not sordid) use;
2. The church simultaneously loses its former status as a sacred place. Therefore, Mass and any other public worship or liturgical act is now prohibited there. This means that the church building is closed permanently;
3. All items inside the church be inventoried carefully, and made available first to St. Joseph Parish, Woonsocket, and then to other parishes.

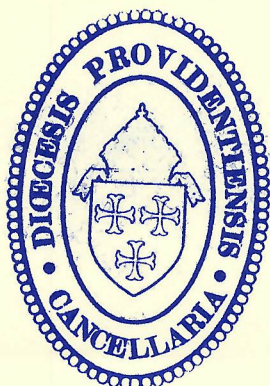
The effective date of this decree is February 7, 2022, at 11:59pm.

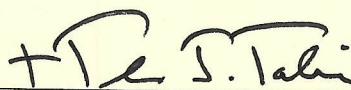
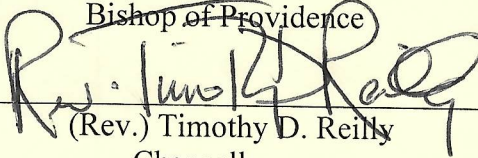
I direct that this decree be forwarded to the parish administrator of All Saints Parish, who will provide copies to parishioners at the only remaining Sunday Mass on January 16, 2022.

Parishioners who wish to make recourse against this decree have the right to do so. According to Church law (Canon 1734, §2), they must do so **within 10 (ten) business days** of receiving notification of this decree. Any recourse must be submitted in writing via postal mail to Bishop Tobin by January 31, 2022 and must be accompanied by supporting documentation.

At this difficult time, I extend my prayerful support and gratitude to all who have worshipped at the St. Aloysius Gonzaga church building, which has been a longtime spiritual haven in this portion of Woonsocket.

Given in Providence,  
at the Chancery,  
this 7<sup>th</sup> of January, 2022



  
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Thomas J. Tobin  
Bishop of Providence  
  
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(Rev.) Timothy D. Reilly  
Chancellor