

DECREE OF DE-CONSECRATION AND REDUCTION TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE OF

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHURCH, WAI AU, NEW ZEALAND

Canon 1212 Sacred places lose their dedication or blessing if they have been in great measure destroyed, or if they have been permanently made over to secular usage, whether by decree of the competent Ordinary or simply in fact.

Canon 1222 §1 If a church cannot in any way be used for divine worship and there is no possibility of its being restored, the diocesan Bishop may allow it to be used for some secular but not unbecoming purpose.

Canon 1222 §2 Where other grave reasons suggest that a particular church should no longer be used for divine worship, the diocesan Bishop may allow it to be used for a secular but not unbecoming purpose. Before doing so, he must consult the council of priests; he must also have the consent of those who could lawfully claim rights over that church and be sure that the good of souls would not be harmed by the transfer.

The creation of the Parish of the Good Shepherd in 2016 saw the amalgamation of six regional churches under the sole responsibility of one parish priest who travelled great distances to provide regular Masses to the faithful. After numbers dwindled to two, the small congregation at Waiau became unsustainable and in 2023 approval was sought to cease the one scheduled Mass there. The Church has not been used since 30 July 2023. The parish finance council and community cannot maintain the building in its present state indefinitely and the preservation of the church would impose an intolerable financial burden on the parish of the Good Shepherd and these funds would otherwise be much more prudently spent on other parish ministries.

I have met with the Council of Priests and the College of Consultors regarding this particular request, and they have agreed with it. I have met with the Diocesan Finance Council and they also have approved it.

I have met with the parish administrator, and he has reported that the parish leadership team and parish finance committee have discussed the matter and they agree with the proposal to reduce the church to profane and not sordid use.

I have ensured that there are no original deeds and other documents on the parish file indicating that no donors or heirs need to be consulted before I place this juridical act.

I have ensured that the altar, sacred objects, and religious artefacts have been removed from the church.

I have ensured that the good of souls and the spiritual welfare of the faithful will not be detrimentally affected by the church being deconsecrated and the spiritual welfare of the faithful is being provided for within the parish boundaries.

I have carefully considered the law and the facts concerning Our Lady of the Rosary church in Waiau and judge that the reasons given, when considered cumulatively, constitute the grave cause required by the law (canon 1222 §2) for the de-consecration and the relegation of Our Lady of the Rosary church in Waiau, to profane but not sordid use.

I, the undersigned, Bishop of the Diocese of Christchurch, do hereby pronounce and decree that Our Lady of the Rosary church, located at 27 Leslie Street, Waiau is no longer a sacred place for divine worship. It has herewith lost its blessing and consecration. Following the final Mass it will cease to be used for divine worship. It is hereto relegated to profane but not sordid use. (canon 1222 §2)

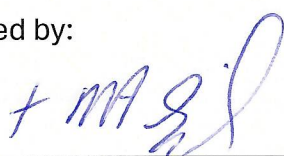
This decree is to be communicated to the parish administrator of Good Shepherd Parish who is the canonical representative of the parish according to canon 539. The parish administrator is to inform the parishioners and provide them with a copy of the decree.

At the same time, I order this decree to be made public to the faithful through its publication on this day, on the website of the Diocese. The publication on the website will be the legitimate notification. A notarised copy of the decree will be sent to the parish administrator.

All those who claim to have been aggrieved by this decree are herewith notified that, if they desire to file recourse against the decree, they are required, *ad validitatem*, to submit a petition in the sense of Canon 1734, §1 to me within 10 days from the legitimate notification of this decree.

Given at the Diocesan Office of Christchurch on this date **24th September 2024**

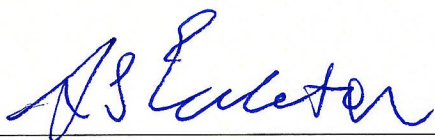
Signed by:



+ Michael Gielen
Bishop of the Diocese of Christchurch



Signed by:



Reverend Simon Eccleton
Chancellor

