



+March 15, 2025

Dear Parishioners of Pope St. John XXIII Parish,

Blessings to you during this Lenten Season!

At the request of Father Tuan Nguyen and your parish councils, I have issued a decree to relegate the Our Lady of the Holy Rosary church building to profane, but not sordid use in accordance with canon 1222, effective March 28, 2025.

This means that the building may no longer be used for Catholic divine worship. It is a necessary step before the parish may repurpose the building or any sale of the property can be considered.

As you know, I issued a similar decree in June of 2023, but it was overturned on appeal to the Dicastery for the Clergy at the Vatican because of an error in the consultation process with my presbyteral council. After this earlier decree was nullified, Father Tuan invited parishioners and the public to submit proposals for the potential future of Holy Rosary church. Several proposals were considered, but your parish leadership councils discerned once again that none of these options made sense for your parish going forward. The overwhelming costs associated with the repair and restoration of the building were certainly a major consideration in this decision. After consulting once more with my presbyteral council, I agree that this is the right thing to do.

I am very grateful for the dedication and hard work of Father Tuan and your parish leadership in arriving at this difficult decision. Their prayerfulness, openness to dialogue, and patience exemplifies synodality.

Thank you for your patience on this challenging journey, as well. Because of your faith, I am confident that the Church's mission of evangelization and service endures in Tacoma. I am with you in prayer as you move forward as a parish community, strengthened by the grace poured out by Jesus Christ. As always, I remain,

In the Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Etienne". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle



DECREE

To Reverend Tuan V. Nguyen, Pastor
and the Parishioners of Pope St. John XXIII Parish in Tacoma, Washington

WHEREAS, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church in Tacoma, Washington was built in 1920 and dedicated on November 21, 1921 as the parish church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Parish; and

WHEREAS, a part of the ceiling crumbled and fell into the choir loft and into the back of the church on October 6, 2018, which caused the building to be closed for an engineering evaluation due to safety concerns; the evaluation determined that the church must be closed to the public until it could be made safe; and

WHEREAS, a budget estimate for the repair project from 2019 showed that the cost to repair and restore the building would be over \$17 million, with construction costs having risen since then; and

WHEREAS, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Parish was merged with nearby parishes in an extinctive union by my decree of July 1, 2021 so that the former parish church now belongs to and is a subsidiary church of Pope St. John XXIII Parish in Tacoma; and

WHEREAS, the costs to repair Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church are too great for the parish to bear; and

WHEREAS, the pastor of Pope St. John XXIII Parish has petitioned me, with the consent of his finance council and pastoral council, to relegate the church to profane use; and

WHEREAS, I have gathered the Presbyteral Council to hear their opinion on this question in accordance with canon 1222 §2 at a meeting on December 12, 2024; and

WHEREAS, I have determined that the state of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church is precarious and that the costs to repair this sacred edifice are overwhelming, and that these circumstances constitute a grave cause suggesting that the church no longer be used for divine worship in accordance with canon 1222 §2; and

WHEREAS, I am satisfied that, while there is no doubt that the loss of a historic church building can be discouraging, ultimately the good of souls will not suffer detriment by this decision.

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby decree that


1. Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church located at 424 South 30th Street in Tacoma, Washington be relegated to profane but not sordid use in accordance with canon 1222, effective March 28, 2025.
2. This decree is to be communicated immediately to the pastor of Pope St. John XXIII Parish and to his parishioners through publication in the parish bulletin or by other suitable means. It should also be posted to the website of the Archdiocese of Seattle.


To seek revocation or emendation of this decree, the first step that is required by canon law is to propose recourse to the author of the decree in writing within 10 useful days of the communication of the decree, in accord with canon 1734. In order to meet this requirement, a written request must be sent to: Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, Archbishop of Seattle, 710 9th Avenue, Seattle, Washington, 98104.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery
of the Archdiocese of Seattle
this 14th day of March
in the year of our Lord, 2025.




Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle


Benjamin Altenhofen
Chancellor