



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

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ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA ANNOUNCES THE RELEGATION OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH IN MARCUS HOOK TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Immaculate Conception Church in Marcus Hook has been relegated to profane but not sordid use. This formal, canonical designation means that it will no longer serve as a worship site of Saint John Fisher Parish in Boothwyn and that it will close as a Roman Catholic church.

Contextual Background

In July 2013, Immaculate Conception Parish in Marcus Hook and Holy Saviour Parish in Linwood, both in Delaware County, were merged with nearby Saint John Fisher Parish in Boothwyn. Subsequently, both churches were designated as worship sites. Holy Saviour Church was closed in 2015. Since 2013 Saint John Fisher Parish has been responsible for sacramental activity in Immaculate Conception Church and for the physical maintenance of the church building.

Today's Announcement

Today, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced that Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, Archbishop of Philadelphia, has approved the relegation of the Immaculate Conception church building to profane but not sordid use effective July 19, 2026.

This formal, canonical designation means that the building will close and not function as a Roman Catholic church.

This information was shared with parishioners at all Masses this weekend at Saint John Fisher Parish. A copy of the official canonical decree regarding the relegation can be found here: <https://catholicphilly.com/media-files/2026/05/IC-decree.pdf>

Further Information Regarding Today's Announcement

The formal request to close a place of worship typically originates from the pastor of the parish, together with his parish pastoral and finance councils after joint study and consultation. The request is then reviewed by the Archdiocesan Council of Priests and presented to Archbishop Pérez, who, after a careful review of all supporting factors, makes the final decision.

Immaculate Conception Church Building (Marcus Hook)

Immaculate Conception Parish was founded in 1917 as a personal parish for Catholics of Italian descent living in Marcus Hook, Chester, Linwood, Boothwyn, and Trainer. After the merger with Saint John Fisher Parish in 2013, significant elements of Immaculate Conception Church and Holy Saviour Church were incorporated at Saint John Fisher Church, and a strong sense of unity among the faithful of the region was fostered at the main parish church.

Maintenance of the Immaculate Conception Church building has resulted in expenditures totaling approximately \$300,000 for significant repairs over the past 13 years by Saint John Fisher Parish. The church roof is currently in need of repair, a project estimated to cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Those estimates will continue to rise with the passage of time. Immaculate Conception Church, located only three miles from Saint John Fisher Church, has witnessed a sharp decline in sacramental activity in recent times. Over the past two years, for example, it has been used for one wedding and three funerals. Based on the lack of sacramental activity at the Immaculate Conception worship site and the continued strain on Saint John Fisher Parish's finances caused by maintenance needs for that building, the pastor, along with his pastoral and finance councils, requested the relegation, which has been approved.

The future disposition of the Immaculate Conception church building will be determined by the pastor of Saint John Fisher Parish in consultation with the parish pastoral and finance councils in accord with relevant Church law and Archdiocesan policies, and in a manner consistent with providing for continued parish viability and sustainability.

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Editor's Note: A copy of the canonical decree relegating Immaculate Conception Church in Marcus Hook to profane but not sordid use can be found at <https://catholicphilly.com/media-files/2026/05/IC-decree.pdf>.