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### **Status of Holy Cross Church in Brandy Camp changes**

Father Ross Miceli, pastor of St. Boniface Parish in Kersey, announced on July 18 that the Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico, bishop of Erie, after consultation with the presbyteral council, has relegated Holy Cross Church in Brandy Camp, a secondary church of St. Boniface Parish, to “profane but not sordid use,” effective July 26, 2020.

The technical designation refers to the canon law process by which a bishop removes the blessing or consecration of a church building. Through that process, the building ceases to be reserved for divine worship, and therefore, can be used for non-religious purposes. The same process is described in England as “reducing a church to secular but not unbecoming use.” This language helps clarify that the term “profane” means secular or non-religious, while “sordid” means unbecoming or inappropriate.

The designation is the result of a process that occurs when a pastor, with the support of the parish finance council and the parish pastoral council, believes a church building can no longer be maintained for any of a variety of reasons.

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A complete history of the church, as well as a detailed narrative of the current situation, is described in the decree announcing the bishop's decision, available at [www.ErieRCD.org/bishop/decrees.html](http://www.ErieRCD.org/bishop/decrees.html) .

Holy Cross served intermittently as either a parish church or as a mission church for the Catholic community in Brandy Camp from 1910 to 2017. In February 2017, the church lost its parochial status for the last time when Holy Cross Parish was merged into Saint Boniface Parish as part of a diocesan-wide pastoral planning initiative. Prior to the merger, only one Mass was celebrated on Sundays in Holy Cross church. Regularly scheduled Sunday Masses ceased there altogether when the merger took effect.

The pastoral planning effort involving parishes that was completed in 2017 was designed to allow parishes to evaluate their own situations going forward, and to make recommendations at the local level.

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