

YOUR NAME  
STREET ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE, ZIPCODE

The Most Reverend John J. O'Hara, Auxiliary Bishop  
Archdiocese of New York  
Office of Strategic Pastoral Planning  
1011 First Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

July , 2016

Your Excellency:

I am in receipt of your letter of June 27, 2016. I am a parishioner of Our Lady of Peace in New York City.

It is my understanding that there is an active recourse against the decree changing the boundary of Saint John the Evangelist and the decree of merger of this parish with Saint John the Evangelist. I was notified by those who have signed the recourse that the Congregation for the Clergy has recently issued an Interlocutory Decree for the continued study of this matter.

Therefore, the transfer of the church to another faith would require either the sale or the lease of the church, and those acts would be premature, given the status of the appeal to the Congregation for Clergy and requirements of Canon Law.

With respect to the ecumenical dimensions that you reference in your letter, I realize that there are many doctrinal differences and issues of décor: styles and positioning of icons, size and use of altars that would forever change the interior of the church that I know and love. To me, the beauty of Our Lady of Peace is not only the name of the church, but its interior space and serenity that lends itself to prayer and reflection. It is also the community of the faithful whose ancestors built, who paid to renovate, and who supported the church with great stewardship.

Whether or not the Coptic Orthodox Church would allow one mass per Sunday, I would not find it satisfactory if all other sacraments were not permissible. If Fr. Loughran will be able to say a mass after the church is sold, he can be allowed to say one now in a Roman Catholic Church.

You have already closed so many churches. Let this one remain open! We have faith that we can rebuild this parish community and do far greater things. With God, all things are possible.

Respectfully yours in Christ,

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PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE