



Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

Ecclesiastical Items from Church Buildings to be Alienated

Premise:

All persons involved with efforts to prepare for the respectful removal of a church building should remain mindful of the important role the worship space has held in the formation of the spiritual lives of those who have gone before and whose sacrifices made the Church's physical presence possible. Individuals should demonstrate sensitivity toward the sacrificial manner in which an item may have been given to the parish or procured by the parish.

Sacred items which are destined for divine worship through dedication or a blessing are to be treated with reverence and must not be employed for improper or profane use even if they are under the control of private individuals (*CIC 1171*).

Examples of Ecclesiastical Items:

Sacred goods are intrinsically connected with liturgical worship and therefore have a value above monetary and emotional consideration. Examples include but are not limited to: altars, tabernacles, chalice, monstrance, paten, ciborium, altar linens, vestments, and Stations of the Cross.

Religious goods are those items readily identifiable as used in the church. Examples include but are not limited to: stained glass windows, pews, statues, kneeler, lectern, altar rail, and bells.

Decision/Placement:

Ecclesiastical goods must first be deemed to hold liturgical, artistic, material, cultural or historical value by the local pastor. Decisions on the placement of a good will give first consideration to the needs and/or possible uses in a neighboring parish. Possible future use, parish sensitivities and needs of the Church's global missions are other considerations that will be made when future placement is decided. This list of considerations is not comprehensive, as every situation will present its own, unique circumstance that must be taken into account.

Judgment regarding the appropriate placement of ecclesiastical, sacred and religious, goods that belong to a church that is to be alienated and respectfully removed must be made by the bishop or his delegate and in consultation with the local pastor. A written proposal for future use will be submitted to the bishop by the local pastor. Permission from the bishop will be granted in a written response to the proposal.

A pastor is permitted to move such items without seeking the permission of the bishop IF the item will be immediately placed into use AND the location to where the ecclesiastical goods are to be moved is within the boundaries of the local parish AND the goods are to remain under the authority of the Church.

No item having a sacred character is to be sold at auction or otherwise placed in a situation where misuse is possible.

Storage of Goods:

If an immediate use for a good, sacred or religious, is not identified at another parish or worship space within the Diocese of Sioux Falls, arrangements will be made for their archived storage at the Diocesan repository located at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph. All items that are placed into storage will be accompanied by appropriate identifiers such as the item's parish of origin, its years of use, particular relevancies, and the identity of its donor (if applicable). The archived items will be cataloged in a way that promotes future use at another Catholic church or chapel. Permission for future use at another location can only be given by the bishop.

Gifts:

Gifts to the Church are accepted without condition. Past donations do not carry with them ties to benefactors or their descendants (*CIC* 1301).

Decommissioning/Disposal:

If it is determined that a sacred or religious item is damaged beyond repair or that a future use is unlikely as a result of its physical state, age or otherwise, disposal may be pursued provided the Church's Norms are upheld.

Items in poor condition that are held in the Diocesan repository may be disposed of only after receiving the permission of the bishop.

Disposal should be carried out using either burial or burning, in accord with Church norms.

Directives/Sequence:

- The parish's pastor/administrator identifies all sacred and religious items of value held by the parish and makes a written recording of the inventory.
- Possible future uses for the individual items are to be investigated and pursued using the following criteria:
 - o Use at a neighboring parish
 - o Complementary style of sacred architecture
- If the identified alternative location for a sacred or religious good is at a neighboring parish under the same pastorate, the pastor is authorized to move the item without seeking the permission of the bishop. Pastors are encouraged to make a written record that documents the move for historical purposes.
- A written and proposed plan for disseminating sacred and religious goods for future use should be presented to the bishop for consideration. The listing should include the items and the parishes to which they will be entrusted. A listing of those goods to be entrusted to the Diocesan Repository should also be included. No items should be moved without the written authorization from the bishop.
- The practice of selling sacred and religious items is discouraged. Therefore, financial contributions made in exchange for a religious item may be accepted only after receiving written permission from the bishop. Should authorization be granted by the bishop, proceeds received from the sale of items or goods found in a church building to be alienated must be directed to ministries and needs of the local parish and entrusted to ecclesial authority.