



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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OFFICE of the MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

January 7, 2016

Dear Brothers,

Over the past several months, nominations have been filed by independent parties against certain parish and Archdiocesan properties, seeking to designate them as “historic” properties. Under the law, a property designated “historic” is subject to government oversight and certain legal restrictions on how the property can be altered or repaired. We intend to challenge the current attempts to have various Church properties designated as “historic” because of concerns that designation allows the government to place undue restrictions on religious structures and property, which in effect interferes with the free practice of our religion. Specifically, we are appealing the designation of the exterior of the former Saint Laurentius Church building as historic, and we are challenging the nominations of the exterior of Saint Charles Borromeo Church and rectory, the interior of the former Saint Laurentius Church building, and five paintings on the ceiling at the Cathedral-Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul to be declared historic.

This approach is consistent with Archdiocesan policy, which directs us not to seek or cooperate with the historic designation of any Church property where the Archdiocese does not consent to or agree with the proposed designation. The policy reiterates the threat to religious freedom and potential financial burdens that historic designation may put upon parishes and other Church entities. This policy was last updated and promulgated in 2010. A copy of that policy statement as found in the “Policy and Guidelines for Parochial Capital Projects” is attached.

Please review and follow the enclosed policy, and contact with me any questions or concerns. Also, please notify me at once if you are aware of any ongoing efforts to designate any of your parish property as “historic”, or if you become aware of any efforts in the future.

Thank you. With best wishes for God’s blessings throughout the New Year, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel J. Kutys".

Monsignor Daniel J. Kutys
Moderator of the Curia