



PRESS RELEASE

INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

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CHICAGO LANDMARK CHURCH RECEIVES NEW NAME & NEW LIFE

(Chicago, 26 June 2006) – A landmark church in Chicago takes on a new name and a new life. On June 23, 2006, Francis Cardinal George issued the decree of erection of the Shrine of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, which will function under the care of the priests of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, who offer the Traditional Latin Mass.

The magnificent church built in the early 1920s as St. Clara Carmelite Church was a thriving parish in the south side area of Woodlawn through the 1970s. Affected by the vicissitudes that ravaged the neighborhood in the 1970s and 80s, the church, then named St. Gelasius, was eventually closed, gutted, and scheduled for demolition in 2003. Because of its architectural value and significance for the neighborhood, however, local interests were able to secure historical landmark status for the building, thus forestalling its demolition.

The Archdiocese of Chicago has since entrusted the care of the former St. Gelasius to the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, an order of priests established in 1990 in Florence, Italy, that, with permission of the Vatican, celebrates all religious ceremonies in the Traditional Latin Rite. The decree of erection establishing the Shrine of Christ the King Sovereign Priest makes it the first shrine in the world to be exclusively dedicated to the Traditional Latin Rite.

While the church building is still completely gutted and in need of infrastructural repair even before the interior can be restored, a steadily growing congregation is already forming as the priests of the Institute of Christ the King have been offering Latin Mass in a chapel located in the adjacent rectory building (6415 S. Woodlawn Ave.).

The Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest now has before it the task of repairing and restoring the church to its former glory, for which considerable funds must be raised.

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