

Email Subject: *For Immediate Release*** Most Holy Redeemer Parishioners Call on Cardinal Dolan to Reopen Shuttered Historic Church**

For Immediate Release

Sunday, December 7, 2025

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Most Holy Redeemer Parishioners Call on Cardinal Dolan to Reopen Shuttered Historic Church

On Sunday, December 7, 2025, the **Committee to Save Most Holy Redeemer** held a rally to call on the archdiocese to reopen their shuttered historic church.

As of September 1, Most Holy Redeemer has not been open to the public, and parishioners have been directed to send their contributions to neighboring parishes.

While there has been no formal Decree of Merger or Elimination of the Nativity-MHR parish, the steps taken at Most Holy Redeemer Church have historically been often followed by parish mergers and by the sale of church sites to luxury housing developers, leading to displacement and to the loss of treasured places of worship.

Within 10 days of the church's closure, parishioners delivered a letter to His Eminence Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, requesting that the church be reopened and that Mass be celebrated at least twice a month—to which parishioners have a right under canon law. Receiving no response, the parishioners delivered a followup letter which has also gone unanswered.

When the 173rd Anniversary of the consecration of the church in 1852 was not celebrated as promised, parishioners attended Mass at a neighboring church and processed to Most Holy Redeemer, where they held a candlelight vigil.

Parishioners are working with Mr. Brody Hale, a civil lawyer with extensive experience in this area of canon law, to protect their canonical rights and document violations.

Most Holy Redeemer parish in the Lower East Side was founded in 1844 by the Redemptorist Fathers, who built this church in 1852. A fine example of German stoneworking craftsmanship, this spectacular historic Catholic church and crypt is a spiritual and cultural anchor of the neighborhood once known as Kleindeutschland, or "Little Germany", a home to large numbers of German immigrants in the 19th century. Most Holy Redeemer has openly welcomed many other Catholic immigrant groups throughout its long history in the neighborhood, and carried out essential charitable works until very recently.

The organizations Village Preservation, the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative and the East Village Community Coalition submitted a request to the Landmarks Preservation Commission on December 13, 2024, arguing for designation as a New York City landmark.

Laura Sewell, Executive Director of the East Village Community Coalition said: “The Archdiocese of New York’s profiting from the sale of historic neighborhood churches has become so commonplace that it’s no longer newsworthy. Parishioners are here today to demonstrate that the 4 fallacies (that there are not enough priests, not enough parishioners, not enough money and too many structural issues) simply do not apply here, and can be easily remedied with the resources provided from the sale of the site of Nativity, after that church was demolished and the parish merged with Most Holy Redeemer.”

Andrew Berman, Executive Director of Village Preservation said: “Most Holy Redeemer Church has been a New York City landmark since it first opened in 1851 as one of the tallest structures anywhere in the city, signaling the rising power of immigrants in Gotham. Over the years, it’s played host to successive waves of immigrants from central, southern, and Eastern Europe, as well as Latin America and all corners of the globe. This is a place that matters dearly to its parishioners and to this entire community, and its history is inextricably linked with the development of our city. We call upon the archdiocese to repair and reopen the church, and we call upon the city’s Landmarks Preservation Commission to declare it an official NYC landmark, so this history can be recognized and preserved in perpetuity.”

Richard Moses, President of the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative (LESPI) said: “It’s time that the archdiocese puts the needs of the parishioners and community first. It needs to reopen the church and ensure the future of this amazing historic sacred site. And the Landmarks Commission needs to step up and landmark the building. The demolition of our city’s beautiful, irreplaceable churches has gone on too long and needs to stop here.”

WHO: COMMITTEE TO SAVE MOST HOLY REDEEMER HISTORIC CHURCH

WHAT: RALLY TO REOPEN THE CHURCH

WHEN: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025, 2:00 PM

WHERE: MOST HOLY REDEEMER, 173 EAST 3RD STREET / Avenues A & B, NEW YORK, NY

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