CHICAGO (LifeSiteNews) — The owner of a luxury event venue that has regularly hosted lewd performances, including a simulated homoerotic orgy and obscene, perverse music videos, is preparing to close on the purchase of the beloved, historic St. Adalbert's Catholic Church in Chicago.

Dan Davidson, who specializes in digital image projection for entertainment venues, told LifeSiteNews on January 17 regarding St. Adalbert's, "I can confirm that engineers have just recently been engaged to begin the inspection of the property," adding that it is "one of many steps … to determine if this is the right fit for us and the community."

About a week before, he confirmed to LifeSiteNews that he intended to purchase the church after it was made public that his ANEW LLC had a letter of intent (LOI) to acquire St. Adalbert's.

It has recently been discovered that in addition to hosting essentially pornographic music video filming — now standard for many celebrities — Davidson's Miami-based flagship venue, **(Warning: graphic content)** The Temple House, was the site of a filmed simulated homoerotic orgy.

Perhaps the most outrageous event held at the Temple House, the 2020 "Love Different" "orgy" performance, which featured pop star Madonna's daughter Lourdes, has been (**WARNING: Graphic Images)** reported on by the UK's *Daily Mail*, as well as (**WARNING: Graphic Video)** publicized by Davidson. Lourdes and several other couples engaged in homoerotic kissing during the performance, as they proceeded to undress each other until they were nearly naked.…

The culmination of the "performance" was too indecent to describe or depict here.

In an interview with LifeSiteNews, canon lawyer Laura Morrison decried Davidson's decision to host the "orgy" as "disgusting."

"They were pandering to this thorough decadence in this culture … It's degradation," Morrison said.

Catholic activist Richard Smaglick has pointed out that since this "sleaze palace" once served as an orthodox Jewish temple called Kneseth Israel Synagogue, Davidson is profiting from the "marketing of its sacrilegious profanation."

Smaglick and Chicago Catholics are concerned that Davidson will likewise desecrate St. Adalbert's, except in a considerably more egregious manner, considering it was once

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consecrated and home to the very "Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity" of Jesus Christ, as Morrison noted to LifeSiteNews.

Remarkably, Davidson's LOI shows his intended use of St. Adalbert's property echoes the use of The Temple House, which hosts parties of all kinds, including weddings and galas, in addition to frequently indecent fashion shows and music videos.

Davidson's LOI reveals a similar planned use for St. Adalbert's: The "purchaser intends to use property for assembly use, including but not limited to: weddings, life celebrations, private events, dinner gatherings, educational seminars, religious ceremonies, charities, galas and other functions."

Smaglick has slammed the planned sale to Davidson by the Archdiocese of Chicago as "indefensible."

"Cardinal Cupich, what do you think our Lord would think of you selling St. Adalbert's to a man who bought an Orthodox Jewish synagogue, named it The Temple House, and used it for all sorts of perversity, including a highly publicized simulated orgy?"

Noting that canon law prohibits the "sordid use" of former churches and allows their "profane" use "provided that the good of souls suffers no detriment thereby," Smaglick compared Cupich's sale of St. Adalbert's to Davidson with sale to a "drug cartel."

"Would you sell St. Adalbert's to a drug cartel and get around your 'sordid use' and 'damage to the good of souls' obligations with a clause in the sales contract that says the property will not be used for the sale or distribution of illegal drugs?"

Smaglick pointed out that "Davidson's egregiously sordid and sacrilegious use of a property specifically selected for its holy character and his active marketing of this perverse misuse is no less destructive in a spiritual sense than a drug cartel's activities are in a physical sense."

Told that Davidson shared with LifeSiteNews his plans to bring the St. Adalbert's property "back to life in a way that is consistent with its original assembly use, responsible, and respectful of the neighborhood," Morrison pointed out that he doesn't "conside[r] the prior sacred character of the church," but rather emphasizes the "community."

LifeSiteNews also shared with Morrison a clause in Davidson's LOI "overview" section on the planned use of St. Adalbert's, which added that the events such as the "life celebrations" and "galas" will be held "in accordance with traditional socially acceptable standards."

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Even if his LOI's reference to "traditional socially acceptable standards" was interpreted in the most innocent way possible, the profane nature of his planned use of St. Adalbert's is unfitting for a formerly sacred space, according to canon law commentary.

Morrison shared with LifeSiteNews that the Commentary on the Code of Canon Law Annotated states, "Because of the prior sacred character of the church, it would not be fitting for a church to be used for purposes too far removed from the dignity of the sacred place," such as a "restaurant, a cinema," or "a market." On the other hand, "It would not be improper to use it as a storehouse for religious objects, a museum of sacred art," or "a meeting place for a religious fraternity."

Digital image projection, Davidson's specialty, would only amplify the profane nature of the use of St. Adalbert's.

In addition, Morrison believes a loophole in Davidson's LOI clause stems from the fact that lewd performers like Madonna's daughter Lourdes or Chris Brown, who were featured at The Temple House, "have become the relatively social[ly] normative elements in society."

"So that does give him wiggle room, it seems to me," Morrison told LifeSiteNews.

Indeed, the immodest dress and dancing that is now typical at modern-day celebrations already guarantees that St. Adalbert's will be put to indecent use if Davidson closes the deal.

After being confronted with the disturbing activities that have taken place at Davidson's prize business, Morrison said she believes the Archdiocese of Chicago will respond appropriately.

"We will reach out in good faith and assume that they'll reach back in good faith and do their due diligence about this buyer," Morrison told LifeSiteNews.

"It's an abomination, what has happened to that synagogue," Morrison went on, adding that while she is unsure whether Jewish law prohibits sordid activities in a former synagogue, Church law intends to preclude such desecration through due diligence, because of the prior sacred character of the church.

Can. 1222 states: §1. "If a church cannot be used in any way for divine worship and there is no possibility of repairing it, the diocesan bishop can relegate it to profane but not sordid use."

§2. Where other grave causes suggest that a church no longer be used for divine worship,

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the diocesan bishop, after having heard the presbyteral council, can relegate it to profane but not sordid use, with the consent of those who legitimately claim rights for themselves in the church and provided that the good of souls suffers no detriment thereby.

Brody Hale, president of the St. Stephen Protomartyr Project that works to preserve Catholic churches for sacred use, has explained to LifeSiteNews that in the case of a church that is not damaged beyond repair, in order to plead a "grave cause" to relegate the church to profane use, one must show "no money is available from *any* source" to continue to maintain it.

It is disputed whether this was the case for St. Adalbert's. It was reported in 2016 that Auxiliary Bishop Alberto Rojas wrote in a letter to the Rev. Mike Enright in April that he had decided, after consultation with then-Archbishop Cupich regarding St. Adalbert's, that they decided there wouldn't be enough "ongoing financial support around which to build that ministry," despite a "huge" donation amounting to at least over a million dollars from a former parishioner.

Hale has also pointed out that guidelines issued in 2013 by the Holy See's Congregation for the Clergy instruct that when a Catholic church is sold, the first preferred outcome for the transfer of ownership is that it will continue to be used "for some level of Catholic worship."

"Only when that is shown to be impossible is it supposed to be the case that the church is passed to a secular party … or a non-Catholic party," Hale explained.

Based on his observations not only of the closure and sale of St. Adalbert's but of similar Catholic church closure cases across the country, Hale believes, "The almighty dollar seems to trump all other principles right now," he told LifeSiteNews.

"Canon law itself, because of this desire to cash in on churches, in my opinion, is getting to the point where it isn't even worth the paper it's printed on, not to say that parishioners shouldn't avail themselves of it," Hale said.

Smaglick highlighted the fact that the sale of St. Adalbert's to Davidson "directly violates" paragraph 2 of Canon 1222, because it presents dangers to souls, and because of the lack of consent to the sale by those who "legitimately claim rights for themselves in the church."

"Such a sale represents an action not consented to by St. Adalbert's parishioners and congregants, one that presents obvious and serious risks to souls," Smaglick pointed out.

Indeed, consent to the sale of the church by its former parishioners is demonstrably lacking.

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In fact, they have fervently objected to the church's closure from the beginning.

The *Chicago Tribune* reported in 2016 how parishioners expressed "anger" over the shuttering of the church after it was announced, and how about 50 parishioners surrounded Auxiliary Bishop Alberto Rojas and another priest to speak about the closure before they could finish processing down the aisle after Mass.

Even when St. Adalbert's was thereafter slated for sale to the Chicago Academy of Music in 2017, a parishioner named Clemente, who helped with a small shop at the church, reported to *South Side Weekly,* "many of the parishioners are not too happy with the Archdiocese."

The Chicago news outlet cited the example of parishioner Rosie Dominguez, who said "that the reason why she got involved with efforts to save St. Adalbert was because she felt that the Archdiocese had completely disregarded her community and home."

Hale told LifeSiteNews that two canonical appeals — one against the elimination of St. Adalbert's parish in 2016, and one against the closure and de-consecration of the church in 2019 — were brought forth by the church's parishioners, and subsequently denied by Cardinal Cupich. The parishioners were also ruled against by what was then known as the Congregation for the Clergy, and then the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, according to Hale.

The church's closure in 2019 has been heart-wrenching to many of its former parishioners, so much so that as recently as last fall, some camped outside the church for over a month to prevent the removal of a La Pietà statue, for fear it would usher in the overhaul of the church.

Since 2019, a group of faithful have also prayed weekly rosary rallies outside both St. Adalbert's and Cardinal Cupich's Holy Name Cathedral. One of the regular participants, Anna Leja, who formerly attended St. Adalbert's monthly Polish-language Mass, told LifeSiteNews in November that while "the destruction of any church is very tragic," the closing of St. Adalbert's is "especially" so, because it has historically been the cultural hub of the local Polish community.

St. Adalbert's, in fact, is considered "the mother church of the Polish Roman Catholic community of the South and West Sides." Its demographics had since shifted so that prior to its closing, it primarily served the Mexican-American community.

Remarkably, locals of all stripes have openly opposed the commercial sale of St. Adalbert's,

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including left-leaning activists and the local alderman, Byron Sigcho-Lopez, who has been working to downzone the church since 2020 in an effort to ensure that the community could vet any proposed sale of the church.

Lopez has argued that the Archdiocese of Chicago has shunned any interest in community input regarding the church's sale, even after the mayor's office gave the "assurance that any proposal" for the use of the church "would be fully vetted by the community," he told LifeSiteNews.

Davidson has expressed interest in determining whether his planned use of St. Adalbert's is "the right fit for the community." Now is the chance to show that it is not, and to say, in the words of Smaglick:

> "It's time, Cardinal Cupich, for you to withdraw from this gravely irresponsible and canonically unsound transaction. Anything less would be a serious disgrace to Christ's Church. We can tolerate no more of that from those entrusted to lead it."

Flood the offices of the Archdiocese of Chicago with a resounding "no" to Davidson's planned purchase of St. Adalbert's:

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