



**CITY OF CHICAGO**



**JEANETTE B. TAYLOR  
ALDERMAN, 20TH WARD**

5/9/23

Archdiocese of Chicago  
835 N Rush St  
Chicago, IL 60611

His Eminence, Blase Cardinal Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago  
Ms. Betsy Bohlen, COO of the Archdiocese of Chicago  
Mr. Eric Wollan, Chief Capital Assets Officer of the Archdiocese of Chicago

I am writing to you as the Alderman of the 20th Ward to express my concern surrounding the situation at the Shrine of Christ the King, one of our Ward's architectural treasures and a congregation that is a valued part of our community. As you know, my predecessors in this office have been committed to the preservation of the Shrine/St. Gelasius/St. Clara as a local Landmark and neighborhood anchor. When I was elected in 2019, I was delighted to see the continuing restoration progress underway at the Shrine, and I felt assured of the continued success of this inspiring renovation.

Since the summer, I have been deeply concerned by your administration's decision to suppress the Institute's ability to operate at the Shrine. The Institute and the ever-growing congregation of Shrine faithful have been an integral part of the 20th Ward since they first arrived at the prior Cardinal's invitation in 2003. They have taken on a challenging project in restoring the Shrine and have demonstrated a remarkable capacity to attract both people and resources into an area with a very small Catholic population. While many Shrine faithful may not live in Woodlawn, we know that the Shrine is their spiritual home, and we consider them a vital part of our community.

Shrine faithful bring welcome dollars to our local coffee shops, restaurants, and small businesses. In addition, the restoration of the Shrine itself has attracted a significant amount of resources to a part of our City which, as you know, is sorely underserved. It has been inspiring for my constituents to see that both individual donors and prestigious organizations like the National Fund for Sacred Places consider their neighborhood worth investing in rather than divesting from. I know they share my concern that the instability introduced into the Institute's position at the Shrine by your administration's decision last summer will deter donors in the



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future and cut the Shrine off from the further millions it needs to be a fully functional and operational building up to City of Chicago code.

On behalf of my constituents, I am asking your administration to restore confidence in the Shrine's restoration by allowing the Institute to operate according to the terms of your original agreement with them. I am hopeful that the Shrine's restoration may continue to flourish.

If you have any questions regarding my support, please contact me at 773-966-5336 or via email at [jeanette.taylor@ityofchicago.org](mailto:jeanette.taylor@ityofchicago.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JB" with a large flourish.

Jeanette Taylor

City of Chicago 20th Ward Alderwoman

CC: National Trust for Historic Preservation; Landmarks Illinois; Preservation Chicago; National Fund for Sacred Places; Commission on Chicago Landmarks; Northern Illinois Historic League; Hyde Park Historical Society; Save the Shrine; Institute of Christ the King