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Crystal Cathedral to move to smaller Catholic church

Adelle M. Banks Religion News Service | Jun. 11, 2012

In a building swap, the Crystal Cathedral has announced it will move its congregation to a smaller Roman Catholic church after the iconic Protestant megachurch was sold to the Catholic Diocese of Orange, Calif.

The cathedral, plagued by huge debt and squabbles among family members of founder Robert H. Schuller, will move to a space with less than half of its current seating capacity. Sheila Schuller Coleman, Schuller's daughter and the recent pastor at the cathedral, started a new church nearby in March.

Last fall, a bankruptcy judge approved the diocese's $57.5 million purchase of the glass-walled building in Garden Grove. The cathedral's congregation is exercising an option in the sales agreement that permits it to move to St. Callistus Catholic Church in June 2013.

The Catholic congregation at St. Callistus, and later, the administrative offices of the diocese, will move to the Crystal Cathedral site.

The Cathedral congregation will pay $25,000 in monthly rent for two years starting January 2014, with the cost escalating in a predetermined formula after that. The cathedral said the length of the lease agreement has not been determined.

"This is another important step in the revival that has been taking place at the Crystal Cathedral," said John Charles, its CEO and president, in a Thursday statement.

When the sale was completed in November, Bishop Tod Brown of the Orange diocese said the agreement would retain Crystal Cathedral as a house of worship and "provide our Catholic community with a new cathedral, pastoral center, parish school and more."

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