

6/25/2010



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

DECREE

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

The parish of Saint Joseph is located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Its parish church is situated at 49 Woodland Street, Fitchburg. This parish serves the pastoral needs of the Franco-American community of Fitchburg and its environs.

The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Committee has recommended to me that the canonical status of St. Joseph Parish be changed from a personal parish to a territorial one. This Committee has also recommended that Immaculate Conception Parish, Fitchburg, Madonna of the Holy Rosary Parish, Fitchburg, and Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Fitchburg, be merged with Saint Joseph Parish and to establish parish boundaries. Such a consolidation, the Committee believes, will better and more effectively serve the spiritual and sacramental needs of the Catholic community in the city of Fitchburg.

In view of this recommendation, and after hearing the parties mandated by law, most especially the Presbyteral Council, in accord with canon 515, §2, of the Code of Canon Law, I, the Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester, holding before me my pastoral responsibilities to this particular church, hereby declare and decree the following:

- A new parish entity, retaining the title Saint Joseph Parish, located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, is hereby created, in accord with canons 121 and 515, §1-2, from these now merged parishes listed above;

- This newly created parish will be a territorial parish with the following boundaries in the city of Fitchburg: Starting at the southwest corner of the boundary between Westminster and Fitchburg, north along the city line to Ashburnham Hill Road, then east along Ashburnham Hill Road to West Street, then west to Sheldon Street, south to River Street,

then east to Main Street, continuing east on Main Street to Rollstone Street, then south on Rollstone Street to Mount Elam Road, and continuing south on Mount Elam Road to the Leominster city line; then west along the Fitchburg-Leominster boundary and the Fitchburg-Westminster boundary;

- The parish community of this newly created parish will worship at Saint Joseph Church.
- Saint Joseph Parish, Fitchburg, will assume the goods, a portion of the assets, including property and patrimonial rights, as well as the burdens and liabilities of the now merged parishes of Immaculate Conception, Madonna of the Holy Rosary, and Sacred Heart of Jesus, respecting the intentions of founders and donors, concerning the allocation of goods and the fulfillment of obligations, in accord with canon 121. The Most Reverend Bishop retains the right, afforded him in canon 122, to allocate some assets, which would be divided among the newly-reconfigured parishes in the city of Fitchburg, namely Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Bernard, and Saint Francis of Assisi, based on equity and justice given that some members of the merged parishes have indicated they will join these remaining parishes;

- Saint Joseph Parish will accommodate, to the extent possible, the cultural and spiritual traditions of Immaculate Conception, Madonna of the Holy Rosary and Sacred Heart of Jesus Parishes;

- Saint Joseph Parish will enjoy public juridic personality by the law itself, in accord with canon 515, §3;
- The sacramental records of the former Immaculate Conception and Madonna of the Holy Rosary Parishes will be placed under the guardianship of Saint Joseph Parish.

The effective date of this decree is July 1, 2010 at 12:01 a.m.

I order that this decree be published.

Given at Worcester, Massachusetts, in the halls of the Chancery, this the twenty third day of June, in the year of our Lord, two thousand ten.

Reverend Monsignor Thomas J. Sullivan
Chancellor

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, D.D., S.T.D.
Bishop of Worcester