

DAVID ALLEN ZUBIK



By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See
BISHOP OF PITTSBURGH

DECREE

THE EXTINGTIVE UNION OF MATER DOLOROSA PARISH, SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, AND SAINT WENDELIN PARISH INTO SAINT CLARE OF ASSISI PARISH

Whereas, the origins of Mater Dolorosa Parish can be traced to the discovery of oil in the 1870s. A church was built, and, from 1875 until 1924, Mater Dolorosa was a mission of Saint Patrick Parish, Sugar Creek. In 1924, the Mater Dolorosa Parish became independent with the assignment of a resident pastor.

Whereas, the origin of Saint Joseph Parish can be traced to a petition sent to the bishop on May 6, 1847 requesting permission to build a church. In 1863, the first resident pastor was assigned and Saint Joseph became a parish in its own right.

Whereas, what would become Saint Wendelin Parish started with the arrival of German settlers in the area. In 1845, the community built a small log school and chapel. Beginning about 1851, priests from Saint Philomena Parish in Pittsburgh or Saint Patrick Parish in Sugar Creek occasionally visited the area and conducted services. In 1863, Saint Wendelin became a mission of Saint Peter Parish, Butler. In 1880, the Capuchin Fathers were assigned to minister to the parish. In 1926 Saint Wendelin Parish became independent with the assignment of a resident pastor.

Whereas, information regarding the future of the parishes has been consistently communicated to the parishioners in the weekly, combined parish bulletin, on the parish website, and at announcements during weekend Masses.

Whereas, because in-person assemblies could not be held due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a virtual parish assembly was posted on the parish website on September 1, 2020, to provide information to the people of the parishes and to receive parishioner input regarding the possible merger of the parishes.

Whereas on October 7, 2020, three (3) petitions were presented to the diocesan bishop, each signed by the one priest who serves as Administrator of Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish, along with the signatures of the respective Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils requesting that Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish be merged into Saint Clare of Assisi Parish forming an extinctive union.

Whereas merging these parishes will provide more vibrant and effective ministries to the faithful and, because of the fewer number of priests in the diocese and faithful in the territory, forming one parish will facilitate a stronger community of the faithful for liturgical worship, ministry, and outreach.

Whereas, merging these parishes will better facilitate the ability of the assigned clergy to work together, building upon one another's individual talents, in order to better serve the People of God entrusted to their pastoral care.

Whereas, merging these parishes will provide greater and more accessible resources for parochial administration and the employment of effective staff members.

Whereas, the need for evangelization is pressing in the territories concerned and merging these parishes will make resources available for the effective proclamation of the Gospel so as to enliven the Faith, bring the people closer to the Lord, and win souls for Christ.

Therefore, having received the petition of the three (3) parishes and having heard the Presbyteral Council on October 19, 2020 and the Vicars General on the same day, and with no harm coming to the good of souls and indeed for the spiritual benefit of the faithful, and all of the requirements of canons 50, 51, 127, 166, and 515 having been fulfilled, we do hereby decree the following:

1. By means of an extinctive union Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish are merged and subsumed into the newly formed Saint Clare of Assisi Parish, which is erected by this decree according to the prescriptions of canon 515§ 2 of the *Code of Canon Law*.
2. In accordance with the norms of law (cf. canon 121), all assets, responsibilities and liabilities of Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish are transferred into the newly erected Saint Clare of Assisi Parish. The intention of donors is to be respected.

3. Furthermore, the voluntary offerings of the faithful and all other grants that have been made and will be made to Saint Clare of Assisi Parish constitute its revenue.
4. All sacramental records from Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish will be housed at the Archives and Records Center of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
5. All churches are to remain open to the faithful for at least occasional sacred worship, whether public or private (cf. can. 1214). If a church is not used for regular public worship, the holy Mass is to be celebrated there at least every year on the solemnity of the anniversary of the church's dedication and on the solemnity of the church's title, in accord with current liturgical norms (cf. can. 1167 §2 and 1168 of the former Code of Canon Law, and can. 2 of the present Code). If such an observance is impeded by another date of higher rank according to the Roman calendar, the impeded solemnity is to be transferred to the first available date thereafter.
6. All present members of Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish are entitled to be parishioners of Saint Clare of Assisi Parish according to the universal law and legitimate custom within the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
7. The boundaries of Saint Clare of Assisi Parish shall be as follows:

Beginning at the point of beginning at the intersection of the western border of Concord Township and Hooker Road, proceed east along the centerline of Hooker Road to the intersection with the Concord Township-Fairview Township border; proceed north along the western Fairview Township border to the Parker Township border; proceed north and east along the Parker Township border to the Butler County-Armstrong County border; proceed south along the Butler County border to the southeast corner of Donegal Township; proceed west along the southern border of Donegal Township to the intersection with the northeast corner of Summit Township; proceed south along the Summit Township border to the intersection with US Route 422; proceed west along the centerline of US Route 422 to a point directly south of the intersection of Grant Avenue and 2nd Street; proceed north via airline route to the intersection of Grant Avenue and 2nd Street; proceed north via airline route to the endpoint of 4th Street; proceed northwest via airline route to the endpoint of 6th Street; proceed northwest via airline route to the endpoint of 10th Street; proceed west via airline route to the endpoint of Anderson Road; proceed northwest via airline route to the intersection of Chicora Road (PA Route 68) and the southern Oakland Township border; proceed west and north along the Oakland Township border to the southwest corner of Concord Township; proceed north along the western Concord Township border to the point of beginning.

This decree becomes effective at 12:01 AM on January 4, 2021, anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Finally, those who have the right may appeal this decree in accordance with the prescriptions of the law.

Given at Pittsburgh, PA, this 19th day of November, in the Year of Our Lord 2020.

+ David A. Zubik
Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

Ellen M. Mady
Ellen M. Mady
Chancellor

