



## DIocese OF OGDENSBURG

### *Office of the Chancellor*

622 WASHINGTON STREET • P.O. BOX 369 • OGDENSBURG, NEW YORK 13669  
TELEPHONE: 315-393-2920 ext. 1310 • FAX: 1-866-314-7296 • email: jcrowley@rcdony.org

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March 6, 2019

Reverend Monsignor Robert A. Aucoin  
St. Mary's Church  
8408 South Main Street  
Evans Mills, New York 13637

Dear Monsignor Aucoin,

The parish of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York was established by Right Reverend Henry Gabriels on November 16, 1920. The parish of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y was erected by the Right Reverend Joseph Conroy on June 26, 1925. The parish of St. Theresa's, Theresa was established by the Right Reverend Henry Gabriels on October 15, 1901.

Your request to consolidate the parishes of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y. and St. Theresa's Theresa was considered by the Presbyteral Council on February 27, 2019.

You have consulted extensively with the trustees, pastoral councils, finance councils, parishioners and all whose rights could be affected. Opportunities were provided for the faithful to offer their thoughts on such a proposal. You have provided Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, D.D., J.C.L. with the motivation for this request and parishioners have expressed their support for this proposed consolidation.

I am pleased to inform you, Bishop Terry R. LaValley has accepted your proposal and the consolidated parish will be named St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York. Enclosed you will find the Decree of Extinctive Union.

The Presbyteral Council of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg on February 27, 2019 also considered your additional request, and Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, D.D., J.C.L. hereby relegates the St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia and St. Theresa's Church in Theresa to

profane but not sordid use. Please find enclosed Decree Relegating the churches to Profane but Not Sordid Use. This second decree contains a requirement to communicate its content without delay to parishioners via the bulletin for three consecutive weeks. Please send a copy of those bulletins to my office.

Thank you for your diligence, leadership and pastoral care working with your trustees, parish councils and community members. If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deacon James Crowley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "C".

Deacon James Crowley  
Chancellor

Enclosure

cc: Reverend Kevin J. O'Brien



**DECREE OF EXTINGTIVE UNION OF**  
**ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF EVANS MILLS, NEW YORK**  
**and**  
**ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA, N.Y.**  
**and**  
**ST. THERESA'S CHURCH, THERESA**  
**into**  
**ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF EVANS MILLS, NEW YORK**

Whereas the parish of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York was established by Right Reverend Henry Gabriels, Second Bishop of Ogdensburg, on November 16, 1920, and the parish of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y. was established by the Right Reverend Joseph H. Conroy, Third Bishop of Ogdensburg, on June 26, 1925, and the parish of St. Theresa's Church, Theresa was established by Right Reverend Henry Gabriels, Second Bishop of Ogdensburg, on October 15, 1901 ; and

Whereas the pastoral circumstances of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, including the decline of Catholic population in these parishes, the decline in numbers of the faithful attending Mass in these parishes, the declining number of pastors available, and changes in the distribution of sacred ministers pursuant to the Living Stones Planning Process; and

Whereas the pastor of the foregoing parishes, Monsignor Robert H. Aucoin, has petitioned for an Extingtive Union Merged the foregoing parishes; and

Whereas, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Ogdensburg was provided with relevant information about the petition to consolidate these parishes, and was heard by

me on the question of merging the parish of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y. and St. Theresa's Church, Theresa into St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, and the Presbyteral Council, after discussion and deliberation, recommended approval of the petition to merge the parishes,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg, having heard the opinion of the Presbyteral Council on February 27, 2019, according to the norm of canon 515 §2 regarding a proposed extinctive union of the above-named parishes, hereby decree:

1. That I find from the documentation submitted that the required consultation with the trustees, pastoral council, finance council and parishioners and all whose rights could be affected has been had, and just cause for consolidation exists;
2. That just cause for the consolidation has been established by the proofs submitted by the petitioner, to wit:
  - 1) concern for souls
  - 2) declining number of parishioners attending Mass;
  - 3) constituent parishes are currently served by one pastor and staff;
  - 4) other options were considered and rejected;
  - 5) consolidation will simplify administration of the parish;
  - 6) the proposed merger is consistent with the *Living Stones* pastoral plans for these parishes;
  - 7) the proposed merger will not harm the good of souls;
  - 8) consolidation will encourage unity among the faithful; and
  - 9) the constituent parishes share common pastoral programs.
3. That the parishes of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y. and St. Theresa's Church, Theresa shall be merged into St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York ("Merged Parish") according to the norm of canon 121;
4. That the Merged Parish, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, shall be territorial, its territory encompassing all that area encompassed by the combined boundaries of the three former parishes, as those boundaries exist on the date of this decree;
5. That the church building of the St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, shall retain its name and shall remain open for regular worship by the faithful;
6. That all Masses, baptisms, weddings or funerals for the Merged Parish shall be celebrated in the regular worship site of the Merged Parish;

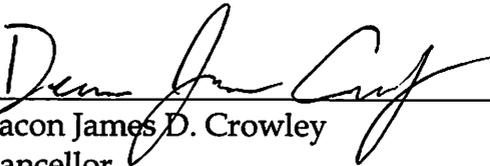
7. That the church building of St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia, N.Y. and St. Theresa's Church, Theresa, shall be relegated to profane but not sordid use pursuant to a separate decree issued simultaneously herewith;
8. That all goods, liabilities, and assets of the constituent parishes will become the goods, assets, and liabilities of the Merged Parish, in accord with canon 121;
9. That all the sacramental and other records of St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia and St. Theresa's Church, Theresa, be maintained in the parish office of the Merged Parish;
10. That the Pastor shall obtain an order from the New York Supreme Court merging the civil corporations pursuant to the Religious Corporation Law; and
11. That the pastor communicate the content of this decree to all affected parishioners by means of a bulletin announcement without delay.

These provisions may be appealed according to the norm of law (cf. canon 1734 §1). The time for hierarchical recourse begins to run with lawful notification of this decree to the pastor. Petition for recourse must be made to the diocesan bishop. All things to the contrary not withstanding.



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The Most Rev. Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg



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Deacon James D. Crowley  
Chancellor

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Ogdensburg  
Ogdensburg, New York

As of March 5, 2019



**DECREE RELEGATING  
ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA, N.Y  
AND  
ST. THERESA'S CHURCH, THERESA  
TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE**

Whereas, the parish of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y, erected by the Right Reverend Joseph Conroy, Third Bishop of Ogdensburg, on June 26, 1925 and the parish of St. Theresa's, Theresa, established by the Right Reverend Henry Gabriels, Second Bishop of Ogdensburg, on October 15, 1901 were merged into St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York by the Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Fourteenth Bishop of Ogdensburg, by decree simultaneously issued herewith;

and

Whereas, the territorial boundary of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, was extended by the aforementioned decree to include all the territory formerly contained within the boundaries of the aforementioned parishes;

and

Whereas, after proper and required consultation of the Pastoral Council, Finance Council and parishioners of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church of Philadelphia, N.Y, St. Theresa's, Theresa and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, and neighboring pastors, and others whose rights could be injured, Reverend Monsignor Robert H. Aucoin, has petitioned that the church building of St. Joseph's in Philadelphia and St. Theresa's in Theresa be relegated to profane but not sordid use;

and

Whereas, after consideration of necessary proofs and hearing from those whose rights could be injured, the undersigned finds that grave cause exists for the granting of the petition to relegate these churches to profane use, to wit:

1. Relegation of these churches is consistent with the *Living Stones* pastoral plans for these churches;
2. These churches were served by the same pastor;
3. There has been a decline in the number of the faithful attending these churches;
4. These churches are under the care of one pastor and the needs of parishioners will be met by the pastor and staff at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York;
5. Closure will not harm the good of souls;
6. Bringing the faithful together in one worship site at St. Mary's will enhance the faith life of the faithful;
7. Parishioners of these churches freely attend Mass at St. Mary's in Evans Mills;
8. Closure will lead to greater parish unity at one worship site;
9. The request for relegation of these churches comes from the grass roots; and
10. Bringing all the worshippers to one location will make the parish more vibrant, provide for better participation and will foster evangelization.

and

Whereas, on February 27, 2019, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, after being supplied with sufficient information to make an informed decision in a Memorandum from the undersigned dated and delivered December 31, 2018, was heard by me on the question of relegating St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia and St. Theresa's Church, Theresa to profane but not sordid use (Canons 50, 51, 127, 166, 1214, and 1222) and in the opinion of the Presbyteral Council relegation to profane but not sordid use was appropriate,

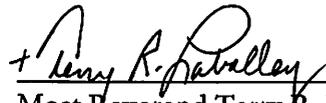
Therefore,

I, Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg, hereby declare the churches of St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia and St. Theresa's in Theresa be and hereby are relegated to profane but not sordid use.

The pastor of the St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York, shall protect the sacred character of any and all sacred objects and altars in the churches by destruction or removal as required by Canons 1212 and 1238.

The pastor of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Evans Mills, New York is to communicate the content of this decree to all effected parishioners without delay by an announcement placed in the parish bulletin.

The time for hierarchical recourse (Can. 1734§2) begins to run with lawful notification of this decree to the pastor. Petition for recourse must be made to the Ordinary. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

  
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Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

  
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Deacon James D. Crowley  
Chancellor

Given this day at the Chancery of the Diocese of Ogdensburg  
Ogdensburg, NY

As of March 5, 2019