



Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Providence
One Cathedral Square
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: (401) 278-4546

DECREE

IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN.

In 2007, All Saints Parish was created through the canonical merger of Our Lady of Victories, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, and St. Ann parishes, all in Woonsocket. In its brief history, All Saints Parish has served the Catholic faithful in central Woonsocket, and even before the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, the parish was confronting a diminishing demographic shift in population with a resulting decline in sacramental practice. Total registered families declined from 748 in 2019 to approximately 134 currently. An approximate total of 75 - 90 individuals currently attend the only remaining Sunday Mass. From 2015-2019, there were 171 Baptisms; 118 children received First Communion; there were 117 Confirmations (many of these sacraments of initiation were for the Spanish-speaking families that since have relocated to Holy Trinity Parish); and 6 weddings. For 2020, there were no participants enrolled in the parish RCIA program, and neither First Communions, Confirmations, nor weddings. All Saints Parish no longer offers a Religious Education Program, nor does it employ a Director of Religious Education. Since the 2018 retirement of its most recent pastor, All Saints Parish has shared its only assigned priest with a neighboring parish. There are no Baptisms, First Communions, Confirmations, or weddings scheduled for the foreseeable future. Sadly, the lack of sacramental practice has undermined further parish viability.

Additionally, decades of deferred maintenance are bringing significant capital needs for the church building including: water- and plaster-damage inside, drainage issues throughout, and deteriorating mortar on its facade. Estimated costs for these necessary long-term projects total \$1.32 million. Unfortunately, the low-level of weekly collection income, coupled with the necessary attempts to cut the parish budget, make parish operations unsustainable. Anticipated parish cash resources would be approximately \$75,000 by December 2021.

Therefore, having received the request of the parish administrator/pastor, trustees, and finance councils of All Saints and St. Joseph parishes in their letter dated November 17, 2021; desiring to strengthen the Catholic presence in Woonsocket through a formal unity; having heard

those who would be affected by this modification; having consulted the College of Consultors on December 7, 2021; and having consulted the Council of Priests on December 7, 2021 in accord with Canon 515, §2, I hereby decree that:

1. All Saints Parish, Woonsocket (a territorial parish), shall be merged into St. Joseph Parish, Woonsocket (a territorial parish) in an extinctive union (*unio extinctiva*);
2. St. Joseph Parish will receive the membership of All Saints Parish and its territory bounded:
 - Starting at the junction of the Massachusetts – Rhode Island state line and the Blackstone River;
 - Southerly along the Blackstone River to South Main Street;
 - Southerly along but not including South Main Street to Front Street;
 - Southerly along and including both sides of Front Street to Transit Street;
 - Along and including both sides of Transit Street to Gilbert Street; easterly along Gilbert Street to its end;
 - Easterly by an airline from this point to the junction of Williams Street and Knight Street;
 - Northerly along but not including Knight Street to Logee Street;
 - Easterly along but not including Logee Street to Maple Street;
 - Northerly along and including both sides of Maple Street to Monroe Street;
 - Easterly along Monroe Street to its end; easterly by an airline to the junction of Manville Road and Bernon Street;
 - Easterly by an airline from this point to the Blackstone River; easterly along the Blackstone River to the Woonsocket - Cumberland city line;
 - Northeasterly along the city line to Bound Road; northerly along Bound Road to the Massachusetts state line;
 - Westerly along the state line to the starting point.

3. All parish registers containing the records of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Marriage, and deaths of All Saints Parish will be faithfully maintained at the parish office of St. Joseph, in accord with Canon 535;
4. All assets, debts, and liabilities of All Saints Parish shall become the assets, debts, and liabilities of St. Joseph Parish, in accord with Canon 121.

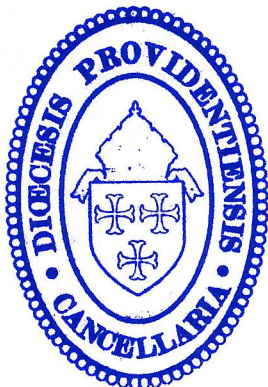
The effective date of this decree is February 7, 2022, at 11:59pm.

I direct that this decree be forwarded to Father Ryan Simas, the administrator of All Saints Parish and the pastor of St. Joseph Parish, who will provide copies to parishioners at all Masses at both parishes on the weekend of January 15 - 16, 2022.

Parishioners who wish to make recourse against this decree have the right to do so. According to Church law (Canon 1734, §2), they must do so **within 10 (ten) business days** of receiving notification of this decree. Any recourse must be submitted in writing via postal mail to Bishop Tobin by January 31, 2022 and must be accompanied by supporting documentation.

At this time of transition, I extend my prayerful support to the members of All Saints Parish (previously Our Lady of Victories, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, and St. Ann parishes) which has been a source of stability and strength for faithful families for generations. Let us continue to rely upon God's goodness and providence as we begin a new chapter in our common journey of faith.

Given in Providence,
at the Chancery,
this 7th of January 2022



Thomas J. Tobin
Bishop of Providence

(Rev.) Timothy D. Reilly
Chancellor