

DECREE

**Merging All Saints Parish, Lancaster, New Hampshire, Saint Matthew Parish, Whitefield, New Hampshire and including the missions of Saint Agnes in Jefferson, New Hampshire, Saint Patrick in Carroll, New Hampshire and Our Lady of the Mountains in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire
To form one new juridical person**

All Saints Parish, including the mission of Saint Agnes, has served the Catholic faithful of Lancaster and Jefferson since 1856. Saint Matthew Parish, including the missions of Saint Patrick and Our Lady of the Mountains, has served the Catholic faithful of Whitefield, Bretton Woods, Carroll and Dalton, since 1886. During that time, many people have heard the Word of God, have worshiped and received the sacraments of the Church in these parishes. Now, in an effort to strengthen the preaching of the Gospel and to ensure the vitality of parish life, with concern for the best stewardship of resources and the right of the people of God to receive assistance from the Church, especially the Word of God, spiritual sustenance and the sacraments, it is necessary to make new provisions for the spiritual care of the parishioners of these parishes.

To that end, having asked parishioners to make known their needs and desires, having received the recommendations of the reconvened Cluster Task Forces 30 and 31, consisting of two liaisons and the pastor from each of the parishes, after consultation with the dean of the White Mountain Deanery, the Long Range Planning Commission and the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Manchester and the Finance Council, and in accord with canons 121, 515 §2 §3 and 518 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, I hereby:

1. Merge All Saints Parish of Lancaster, New Hampshire, including the mission of Saint Agnes of Jefferson, New Hampshire, and Saint Matthew Parish, of Whitefield, New Hampshire, including the missions of Saint Patrick of Carroll, New Hampshire and Our Lady of the Mountains, Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to form one territorial parish. The union shall take effect at midnight at the end of Sunday, July 5, 2009. The merged parish shall include the membership of the former All Saints Parish and the former Saint Matthew Parish. The existing church edifice of each of the former parishes will remain the sites of worship for the merged parish community, until such time that the pastor, with the advice of his parish pastoral and finance councils, and with my consent, determines otherwise.
2. The boundaries of the new parish will encompass the entire territory of the former All Saints and Saint Matthew Parishes, and including the missions of Saint Agnes, Saint Patrick and Our Lady of the Mountains.

3. Establish that the name of the new territorial parish be known from midnight at the end of Sunday, July 5, 2009 as Gate of Heaven Parish. The name of the current All Saints Church, Saint Matthew Church, Saint Agnes Church, Saint Patrick Church, and Our Lady of the Mountains Church edifices shall remain unchanged.
4. Establish that, in accord with canon 519, a pastor will be appointed to foster the pastoral care of Gate of Heaven.

This decision is based upon a number of components, among them the spiritual welfare of the parish communities, the spread of the Gospel, the fostering of unity of the People of God in the White Mountain Deanery, the enhancement of collaborative ministry, and the best use of available priest personnel.

All parish registers containing the records of baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, marriage, and deaths preserved at All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish shall be transferred to the new territorial parish office where they will be faithfully preserved in accord with canon 535, §§1-5; and according to the norm of canon 121. All assets, whether movable or immovable, and all liabilities of All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish upon this merger, will become the assets and liabilities of the new territorial parish. Furthermore, possession of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to the former All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish shall be transferred to the new territorial parish and shall be administered in accordance with canons 1189 and 1292.

The merger of All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish will suppress and terminate the juridic personality of All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish, which they now possess by law. Therefore, All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish shall be no longer subject in canon law of obligations and rights corresponding to their nature as juridic persons. In addition, said All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish shall be capable no longer of acquiring, retaining, administering, and alienating temporal goods according to the norm of law.

I direct that this Decree be given to the pastor of All Saints Parish and Saint Matthew Parish, and that this information, as well as the “Manner of Initiating Hierarchical Recourse” against this Decree, be communicated at all Masses of obligation on the weekend of Saturday, July 4, 2009 and Sunday, July 5, 2009.

Given at Manchester this 24th day of June, 2009

/s/ _____
Bishop of Manchester

/s/ _____
Moderator of the Curia