

DECREE

Merging Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Charlestown, New Hampshire, Saint Peter Parish in North Walpole, New Hampshire including Saint Joseph Mission in Walpole, New Hampshire

Saint Catherine of Siena Parish has served the Catholic faithful of Charlestown since 1904. Saint Peter Parish, including Saint Joseph Mission, has served the Catholic faithful of North Walpole since 1878. During that time, many people have heard the Word of God, have worshiped and have 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 Cluster Task Force Number Twenty-seven, consisting of the pastors from the parishes and two liaisons from each of the parishes, after consultation with the Dean of the Upper Valley Deanery, the Long Range Planning Commission, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Manchester, and the Diocesan Finance Council, and in accord with canons 121, 515 §2 and 518 of the *1983 Code of Canon Law*, I hereby:

1. Merge Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Charlestown, New Hampshire, and Saint Peter Parish in North Walpole, New Hampshire, including Saint Joseph Mission in Walpole, to form one territorial parish. The merger shall take effect at midnight at the end of Sunday, June 10, 2007. This merged parish shall include the parish communities of the former Saint Catherine of Siena Parish and the former Saint Peter Parish, including Saint Joseph Mission in Walpole, New Hampshire, and shall encompass the territory delineated by the two former parishes, including the entire towns of Acworth, Alstead, Charlestown, Langdon, Walpole, the village precinct of North Walpole and the village precinct of Drewsville, with the western boundary being the Connecticut River indicating the state line between New Hampshire and Vermont. The existing church edifice of each of the former parishes and Saint Joseph Mission will remain the sites of worship for the merged parish community, until such time that the pastor, with the advice of his pastoral council and with my consent, determines otherwise.

2. Establish that the name of the new parish be All Saints Parish, but that the names of the current Saint Catherine of Siena Church edifice, Saint Peter Church edifice, and Saint Joseph Mission Church edifice shall remain unchanged.
3. Establish that, in accord with canon 519, a pastor will be appointed by decree to foster the pastoral care of All Saints Parish Community.

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 Upper Valley 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 Saint Catherine of Siena Parish and Saint Peter Parish will be transferred to All Saints Parish office at the location of the former Saint Catherine of Siena Parish office, where they will be faithfully preserved in accord with canon 535, §§1-5. According to the norm of canon 121, all assets, whether movable or immovable, including Saint Catherine Cemetery and Saint Peter Cemetery, and all liabilities of the two former parishes will become the assets and liabilities of All Saints Parish. Furthermore, ownership of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to the former two parishes will be transferred to All Saints Parish and will be administered in accordance with the prescriptions of Church law.

The merger of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish and Saint Peter Parish will terminate the juridic personality of each of the former parishes, which they now possess by law, and no longer will they be the subjects in canon law of obligations and rights corresponding to their nature as juridic persons, nor will they be capable of acquiring, retaining, administering, or alienating temporal goods according to the norm of law.

I direct that this Decree be given to the pastor of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish and Saint Peter 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, June 9, 2007 and Sunday, June 10, 2007.

Given at Manchester this fourth day of June, 2007.

Bishop of Manchester

Ecclesiastical Notary