



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR  
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

## DECREE

*On the Merger of the Parishes of Saint Thomas in Southington, Immaculate Conception in Southington, Saint Dominic in Southington, Mary Our Queen in Plantsville, and Saint Aloysius in Plantsville, Connecticut*

**WHEREAS**, Saint Thomas Parish in Southington was erected in 1862, Immaculate Conception Parish in Southington was established in 1915, Saint Dominic Parish in Southington was erected in 1971, and in Plantsville, the parishes of Mary Our Queen and Saint Aloysius were both created on September 21, 1961, by one of my predecessors, Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien;

**WHEREAS**, on October 20, 2021, Saint Thomas Church, which was located at 143 Bristol Street, Southington, Connecticut, was relegated to profane but not sordid use, and no recourse was filed against this decree;

**WHEREAS**, in May 2021, I, the undersigned, as Archbishop, wrote to the Catholic faithful in the Southington/Plantsville municipal region to inform them of the imminent pastoral planning process: the Archdiocese's effort to address the reality of fewer priests and of Masses held in church buildings rarely if ever filled to capacity. For the Archdiocese, the pastoral planning process uses the "municipal/regional model," which posits that towns with one high school (as one indicator of population) will have one parish and in some cases only one church;

**WHEREAS**, since the aforementioned municipal region has five parishes with a rich history of faith and service, the primary challenge now, in addition to restructuring the parishes into one parish, is to ensure that the new parish is a vibrant, welcoming, attractive and faith-filled community, and to identify or create a church building with enough capacity for parishioners, especially given that Saint Thomas Church requires costly repairs;

**WHEREAS**, on August 1, 2021, the following parishes in Southington, Connecticut were linked and were served by one pastor: Saint Thomas, Immaculate Conception, and Saint Dominic;

**WHEREAS**, given the aforesaid rationale for pastoral planning, in early 2020, the pastors of the above-named juridic entities engaged in some preliminary discussion and subsequently formed a "Pastoral Planning Committee," which considered how the five parishes could cooperate in ministry. Steps taken included the following: organizing common subsidy and support for Southington Catholic School by the five parishes; identifying a single location for daily Masses; and creating a joint religious education program and a joint youth ministry program. The above-stated areas of cooperation have been implemented and are working smoothly to create unity within the parishes;

**WHEREAS**, Parish Councils and Trustees of the relevant juridic entities will continue to meet so as to develop a plan for the financial management of the new juridic entity, by examining investments, bank accounts, restricted funds, and other relevant issues, and determine the best stewardship for the resources in a unified entity. Additionally, steps are underway to create a united staff for the new parish;

**WHEREAS**, on February 28, and April 7, 2022, the pastor wrote recommending the merger, stating that the aforementioned entities have been working closely together by trying to establish a single mass schedule, combined staff, and a single parish office;

**WHEREAS**, the intention or will of donors, any restrictions, including land, and any acquired rights have been examined and taken into consideration. The Presbyteral Council was consulted on April 25, 2022, in accordance with canon 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law in relation to the modification of parishes and posed no objection;

**WHEREAS**, having judged that sufficient just causes, as noted above, are present and the good of souls will not thereby be impaired;

**I HEREBY DECREE** the amalgamation of Immaculate Conception, Mary Our Queen, Saint Dominic, and Saint Aloysius Parishes, following from canons 121 & 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law, by which they are subsumed into Saint Thomas Parish; the separate juridic (legal) personalities of Immaculate Conception, Mary Our Queen, Saint Dominic, and Saint Aloysius Parishes will cease to exist and will no longer be subjects of obligations and rights under canon law; Immaculate Conception, Mary Our Queen, Saint Dominic, and Saint Aloysius church buildings will remain at present as sacred places for divine worship. Saint Thomas Parish will henceforth be named as Saint Luke Parish.

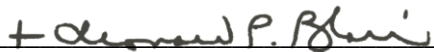
The administration of the church buildings and premises will be based at Saint Luke Parish (at the former Saint Thomas Rectory at 99 Bristol Street, Southington). The assets and liabilities of the former Immaculate Conception, Mary Our Queen, Saint Dominic, and Saint Aloysius Parishes will become the assets and liabilities of Saint Luke Parish. The sacramental registers, along with any other parish records and historical records, shall be preserved at Saint Luke Parish. The territorial boundaries of Saint Luke Parish will henceforth be the combined boundaries of it and the former Parishes of Immaculate Conception, Mary Our Queen, Saint Dominic, and Saint Aloysius.

This decree becomes effective as of July 1, 2022, prior to which the substance of it is to be communicated to parishioners at the aforementioned parishes, including by way of a display in an appropriate place so that parishioners can read it as they enter or exit the churches. It will also be available on the Archdiocese of Hartford website, under News-Public Notices: [<https://archdioceseofhartford.org/public-notice/>]. Canonical recourse may be made within the preceptory time limit of ten (10) business days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (CIC canon 1734 §2).

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of April in the Year of Our Lord 2022.

  
Reverend Christopher M. Ford, J.C.L.  
Chancellor

  
Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair  
Archbishop of Hartford