



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

DECREE

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

This decree concerns the merger/extinctive union type I, (cc. 121 and 515 §2) of Saint Anthony of Padua in Litchfield, Connecticut, and Saint Thomas of Villanova in Goshen, Connecticut and Our Lady of Grace in Bantam, Connecticut, and the conferral of the title of “Saint Louis de Montfort” to the newly created parish. The principal motive is to provide more suitably for the good of souls (*Christus Dominus* no. 32).

Whereas, canon 515 §, stipulates that: It is only for the diocesan bishop to erect, suppress, or alter parishes. He is neither to erect, suppress, nor alter notably parishes, unless he has heard the Presbyteral Council. Willingly desiring in all things to promote the greater glory of God and desirous of providing for the good of souls;

Whereas, considering the recommendations from the Pastoral Planning Committee and the Vicar of Pastoral Planning in consulting with several members of the clergy and lay faithful for the creation of a new parish;

Whereas, from 2010 to 2015, there has been a decrease in the number of registered households, with 6.3% decrease at Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, 3.3% decrease at Saint Thomas Villanova Parish, and 36.5% decrease at Our Lady of Grace Parish;

Whereas, the above decrease in the number of registered Catholic households has brought about a sharp decline in the sacramental activities of the three parishes; for instance, from 2010 to 2015, there was a 16.4% decrease at the Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, 42.9% at Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish, and 6.3% at Our Lady of Grace Parish;

Whereas, having ascertained that there are sufficient means and resources for the support of the pastor and for the proper maintenance of the temporal goods of the parish;

And, having heard the Presbyteral Council on May 1, 2017:

I have decided that the proper care of souls requires the merger of the following parishes: Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Thomas of Villanova, and Our Lady of Grace and the creation of a new parish to serve the Catholic souls living in Litchfield, Goshen and Bantam, titled as Saint Louis de Montfort Parish.

Wherefore, having faithfully observed the requirements of the law, and to provide more suitably for the spiritual and pastoral care of souls,

Invoking the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His Mother, the Ever Blessed Virgin Mary,

I, the undersigned Archbishop of Hartford exercising my ordinary power, herewith create and erect, in accordance of canon 515 §2, the Parish of Saint Louis de Montfort, with all the rights, obligations, and privileges granted it by law.

The geographical boundaries of this Parish shall include the former boundaries of Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish, and Our Lady of Grace Parish, including the three cemeteries located at the extinct aforementioned parishes.

Therefore, all Catholics having domicile or quasi-domicile within the current boundaries of the above three parishes are hereby considered members of Saint Louis de Montfort Parish and, as such, are entrusted to the care of one pastor. The rich legacy and history of Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish, and Our Lady of Grace Parish will be promoted and honored at Saint Louis de Montfort Parish. Together, all of the parishioners are encouraged to unite with the newly merged parish through the union with Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The intentions of the founders and donors regarding the temporal goods and patrimonial rights proper to the extinct Parish of Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, the extinct Parish of Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish and the extinct Parish of Our Lady of Grace Parish, as well as the acquired rights, shall be honored and respected. In addition, the temporal goods, patrimonial rights, and the obligations of each of the extinct parishes shall be assumed by Saint Louis de Montfort Parish in accordance with the norm of law (c. 121).


All the parish and sacrament records of the former parishes of Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Thomas of Villanova, and Our Lady of Grace, are to be properly preserved and safeguarded in the premises of Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Litchfield, Connecticut, in accordance with the norm of law (cc. 535 §§1-5).

This decree becomes effective June 29th, 2017, prior to which the substance of it is to be communicated to parishioners at the aforementioned parishes, including the display in an appropriate place so that parishioners can read it as they enter or exit the Church.

It will also be available on the website, *stewardsfortomorrow.org*. Canonical recourse may be made within the peremptory time limit of ten (10) business days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (c. 1734 §2).

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, on the 2nd day of May in the Year of Our Lord 2017.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan M. Lerner
Chancellor