



**MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD**

DECREE

This decree concerns the merger of Sacred Heart Parish, East Berlin, Connecticut, with St. Paul Parish, Kensington, Connecticut, within the New Britain/Meriden Deanery.

WHEREAS, Sacred Heart Parish in East Berlin was erected in 1970, previous to which it had been a mission church. St. Paul Parish in Kensington, was erected in 1878, and in 1985 the Franciscan Friars of Our Lady of the Angels Province were given charge of it. Following discussion amongst the two parish communities, including their pastoral councils, the Office of Pastoral Planning of the Archdiocese, and the Provincial of the Franciscan Province, the Pastor of St. Paul, Administrator of Sacred Heart, and the respective trustees, recommended that Sacred Heart Parish be subsumed into St. Paul. The recommendation was made for the following reasons:

- 1) The number of parishioners of Sacred Heart has substantially diminished, with 250 people on average attending four weekend masses.
- 2) Only 110 families are presently providing financial contribution on a regular basis, providing significant financial hardship.
- 3) The two churches are only 3.8 miles apart, and thus the faithful of Sacred Heart will not be unduly burdened by such an action.
- 4) Due to the unavailability of priests, the Archdiocese is unable to appoint a pastor, but only a temporary administrator has been assigned for the last several years.
- 5) Collaboration between the two communities has already occurred, with the children of Sacred Heart being enrolled in the religious education program at St. Paul's; the Friars of St. Paul's have also been ministering to institutions previously under the care of Sacred Heart, while sick calls from parishioners of Sacred Heart have been attended to by the Friars.

WHEREAS, the intention or will of donors, any restrictions on assets, including land, as well as any acquired rights, have been examined and taken into consideration. The presbyteral council was consulted on January 23, 2016, in accord with canon 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law in relation to the modification of parishes.

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

I HEREBY DECREE an “extinctive union,” following from canons 121 & 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law, by which Sacred Heart Parish is subsumed into St. Paul Parish; the separate juridic (legal) personality of Sacred Heart Parish will cease to exist, and it will no longer be a subject of obligations and rights under canon law; Sacred Heart church building will remain as a sacred place for divine worship; the administration of the church building and premises will consequently be transferred to Saint Paul Parish, effective at midnight at the end of February 28, 2017.

The assets and liabilities of the former Sacred Heart Parish will become the assets and liabilities of St. Paul Parish. The sacramental registers along with any other parish records and historical documents, shall be preserved at St. Paul’s. The territorial boundaries of St. Paul Parish will henceforth be the combined boundaries of it and that of the former Sacred Heart Parish.

This decree becomes effective as of March 1, 2017, prior to which the substance of it is to be communicated to the faithful by means of notice in the weekend bulletins of both parishes, as well as by publication in the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Transcript*. 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).

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, on the 30th of January, in the Year of Our Lord 2017.



Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair, STD
Archbishop of Hartford



Reverend Ryan Lerner
Chancellor