



MOST REVEREND LEONARD P. BLAIR  
ARCHBISHOP OF HARTFORD

**DECREE**

Merging Saint Anthony Parish in Bristol, Connecticut, and Saint Ann Parish, Bristol, Connecticut, to form one new juridic person, titled Saint Francis de Sales (merger/extinctive union type I (cc. 121 and 515 §2).

**Whereas**, Saint Anthony Parish was established after the first Italian families settled in Bristol in 1901, the immigrants having previously attended Saint Joseph Church in Bristol. By 1920, Italians were determined to have their own parish for a fuller ethnic expression of their spirituality, and on August 21, 1920, Saint Anthony Parish was legally incorporated. Saint Ann Parish started after 1907, when waves of French Catholics migrated to Connecticut from Canada and Maine. Many settled in Bristol. Saint Joseph Parish became their first spiritual home during the 1870s. A request for a separate parish for French-Canadians was sent to the then bishop, the first pastor of Saint Ann Parish was appointed in 1907, and the parish was legally incorporated on January 23, 1908.

**Whereas**, 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 in the Bristol Deanery, of the Waterbury Vicariate, 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, the sacraments and the continuation of ministries, it is necessary to make new provisions for the spiritual care of the parishioners of these parishes.

**Whereas**, from 2010 to 2015, there was a decrease in the number of registered households, from 862 to 690 at Saint Ann Parish and from 1,284 to 996 at Saint Anthony Parish and a concomitant decrease in the sacramental activities at both parishes, 30% at the former and 7.5% at the latter.

**Therefore**, after having asked parishioners to make known their needs and desires through the pastoral planning process, in consultation with lay leadership and the local pastor, the Pastoral Planning Committee, the Office of Pastoral Planning, and having heard the Presbyteral Council on May 1, 2017, in accordance with canons 121, 515 §2 §3 and 518 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, I hereby:

**DECREE**  
the following:

1. Merge Saint Anthony Parish and Saint Ann Parish to form one combined ethnic parish, French and Italian. The union shall take effect on June 29, 2017. The new parish shall include the membership of the former Saint Anthony Parish and the former Saint Ann Parish. The existing church edifice of each of the former parishes will remain the sites of worship for the new 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. Establish that the name of the new territorial parish be known effective June 29, 2017, as the Parish of Saint Francis de Sales. The names of the current Saint Anthony Church and Saint Ann Church edifices shall remain unchanged.
3. Establish that, in accordance with canon 519, a pastor will be appointed to foster the pastoral care of the Parish of Saint Francis de Sales.

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 new Farmington Valley and Bristol Deanery (2), the enhancement of collaborative ministry, and the best use of available resources; for instance, for 2018, an estimated parish operating revenue is estimated at \$1,243,315 with a net surplus of \$181,179 for the same year.

All parish registers containing the records of baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, marriage, and deaths for both parishes will be preserved at the premises of Saint Anthony Church, where they will be faithfully preserved in accordance with canon 535, §§1-5.


According to the norm of canon 121, all assets, whether movable or immovable, and all liabilities of Saint Anthony Parish and Saint Ann Parish upon this merger will become the assets and liabilities of the Parish of Saint Francis de Sales. Furthermore, possession of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to the former Saint Anthony Parish and Saint Ann Parish shall be transferred to the Parish of Saint Francis de Sales and shall be administered in accordance with canons 1189 and 1292.


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

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).

All things 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