



OFFICE OF THE CARDINAL
1011 FIRST AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10022

TIMOTHY MICHAEL DOLAN

Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church

of the Title of Nostra Signora di Guadalupe a Monte Mario

By the Grace of God and the Apostolic See

ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK

DECREE

RESCINDING THE DECREE OF MERGER OF THE TERRITORIAL PARISH OF THE BASILICA OF SAINT PATRICK OLD CATHEDRAL, NEW YORK, AND THE PERSONAL PARISH OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD, NEW YORK

Whereas bishops “feed their sheep in the name of the Lord by fulfilling their office of teaching, sanctifying and governing them” and “pursue their apostolic work as witnesses of Christ to all people” (cf. Vatican II, Decree on the pastoral office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus*, October 28, 1965, n. 11);

Whereas the parish is “pre-eminent among all the other communities present in his Diocese, for which the Bishop has primary responsibility: it is with the parishes above all that he must be concerned” (Pope Saint John Paul II, post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores gregis*, October 16, 2003, n. 45) and whereas the parish “remains the fundamental unit in the daily life of the Diocese” (ibid.);

Whereas “the parish is not an outdated institution” and “continues to be the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”, provided it “does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few”, but on the contrary is “a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach” (cf. Pope Francis, apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, November 24, 2013, n. 28);

Whereas the Bishop should proceed, after consulting the diocesan presbyteral council, to alter territorial boundaries, to divide parishes that are too large, to merge small parishes, to establish new parishes or non-territorial centers for pastoral service in the community, or even to reorganize completely the arrangement of parishes within a particular city if the good of the faithful so requires, and whereas the Bishop may wish to set up a diocesan office or commission that can operate in collaboration with other relevant diocesan commissions in order to study all the issues pertaining to the establishment of parishes and the construction of churches (cf. Congregation for Bishops, Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops *Apostolorum Successores*, February 22, 2004, n. 214);

Whereas the existing parish structure of the archdiocese was largely established between the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries;

Whereas radical changes and shifts in demographics have occurred over the past decades, including a move away from the urban center into the suburbs, together with a substantial immigration of Hispanics;

Whereas the Archdiocese faces a decline in the number of available priests;

Whereas parishes are confronted with a declining number of faithful attending Sunday Mass on a regular basis;

Whereas the changing situation puts a huge financial burden on the smaller parishes, and whereas deficits are covered increasingly by archdiocesan loans;

Whereas on November 2, 2014, I issued a decree of merger of the territorial parish of the Basilica of Saint Patrick Old Cathedral, New York, and the personal parish of Most Precious Blood, New York, effective August 1, 2015;

Whereas on November 2, 2023, I consulted the presbyteral council about the recommendation to rescind this merger and to restore the situation that existed prior to the merger, that is, an independent territorial parish of Saint Patrick Old Cathedral and an independent personal parish of Most Precious Blood, based upon the evaluation of the merger and the fact that the two parishes are too different for a successful merger;

Therefore, I, the undersigned Archbishop of New York, have decided as follows:

DECREE

The decree of merger of the territorial parish of The Basilica of Saint Patrick Old Cathedral, New York, and the personal parish of Most Precious Blood, New York of November 2, 2014, is herewith rescinded. The Office of Pastoral Planning is charged with the execution of this decree.

This decree is effective immediately. At the same time, I order this decree to be made public to all the faithful through its publication on this day on the website of the Archdiocese. This publication on the website will be the legitimate notification. A notarized copy of the decree will be sent to the pastor, and an announcement will be made in the Archdiocesan digital newsroom.

All those who claim to have been aggrieved by this decree are herewith notified that, if they desire to file recourse against our decree, they are required, *ad validitatem*, to submit a petition in the sense of canon 1734 §1 to us within ten useful days from the legitimate notification of this decree.

Given at the Chancery, New York, NY, this 1st day of January 2024, Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God.



+ T. M. CARD. DOLAN

Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York



John P. Cahill
Chancellor