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PORT CHESTER DECISIONS ANNOUNCED

Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, has written to the parishioners of four Port Chester parishes, announcing the decisions for parish mergers in that community. The cardinal had announced in November that, as part of the *Making All Things New* pastoral planning process, such a plan would be developed in consultation with the parish leadership in the four affected parishes, as well as with the Salesians, a religious order who will be assuming the pastoral care for the people of Port Chester.

Following more than six months of this additional discussion and review, and after consultation with the priest council of the archdiocese, it was decided that the parish mergers will take place in two phases. In the first phase, on August 1, 2015, Corpus Christi parish and Our Lady of the Rosary parish will merge, with Corpus Christi designated as the main parish church and Our Lady of the Rosary continuing to be used for Masses and sacraments. Also on August 1, 2015, Sacred Heart of Jesus parish will merge with Our Lady of Mercy parish, with Our Lady of Mercy designated as the main parish church, and Sacred Heart of Jesus, although remaining a church which may be used on special occasions, Masses and sacraments will not be celebrated on a regular basis.

The second phase will go into effect on August 1, 2017 when, with the cooperation of the Salesian Community, the parishes of Corpus Christi – Our Lady of the Rosary, and Our Lady of Mercy – Sacred Heart of Jesus, will merge, with Our Lady of Mercy designated as the parish church.

Cardinal Dolan expressed his thanks to the people of Port Chester for their patient cooperation in this process, and to the Salesian Community for undertaking this new pastoral work, saying “I am grateful to the parishioners of Port Chester who provided me with their thoughtful input on how the Church could best serve the religious and spiritual needs of the people. Great appreciation must also be expressed to the Salesians, who are known for its work in evangelization, particularly among young people, in taking responsibility for this new parish structure. I am confident that this will lead to an active and vibrant Catholic community in Port Chester!”