



DECREE
OF THE AMALGAMATION OF
SAINT MARGARET MARY PARISH,
NORTH COLLEGE HILL, OHIO,
INTO
SAINT ANN PARISH,
GROESBECK, OHIO

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Saint Margaret Mary Parish was founded in 1920; the current church was completed in 1960. Saint Ann Parish was founded in 1953, and its present church building was completed in 1959.

Since July 2022 both parishes have been served by a common pastor. During the following years the parishes began to work together more collaboratively, both administratively and ministerially. However, continued decrease in attendance and financial resources reveals significant challenges to maintaining a vibrant parish community at Saint Margaret Mary. Various discussions have taken place between the pastor, the other clergy and lay staff serving the parishes, the parishioners, and the appropriate archdiocesan offices regarding the best way to meet the needs of the faithful and evangelize in accordance with the mandate of the Lord Jesus.

The pastor of Saint Margaret Mary and Saint Ann Parishes, having consulted the members of both the pastoral councils and finance councils and having heard from the parishioners of both parishes, has proposed an extinctive union in which Saint Margaret Mary Parish is amalgamated into Saint Ann Parish. The pastor and people of these parishes believe this arrangement to be a fitting means to both best meet the present pastoral and spiritual needs of the faithful and more effectively manage the resources at their disposal. Having consulted the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati on May 4, 2026, I have determined that the pastoral mission of the Catholic Church in this portion of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati would best be served through such an amalgamation of Saint Margaret Mary Parish into Saint Ann Parish.

The following factors are identified as contributing to a just cause for this proposed modification:

- 1) The decline in the number of priests able to sustain and staff the parishes in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
- 2) The decline of Catholics practicing their faith due to demographic shifts within the North College Hill, resulting in declining Mass attendance to under 20 % utilization of the church space for a single Mass on a weekend, and the declining and aging population of that neighborhood and St. Margaret Mary Parish. Additionally nearly 50% of those attending Mass do not live within the boundaries of the parish, but drive some distance for the sake of nostalgia.
- 3) Since 2020, St. Margaret Mary has had: 5 Baptisms, 1 Wedding, 12 First Communions, and 12 Confirmations.
- 4) The pool of volunteers continues to decline leading to an absence of ministerial opportunities and a lack of vibrancy.
- 5) Parish finances at St. Margaret Mary are insufficient to maintain the parish infrastructure, or to continue to staff the parish. The parish is drawing on its reserve at the Archdiocese to cover operating costs and once exhausted there is no realistic source of funding.
- 6) There is substantial deferred maintenance in several of the buildings on the campus, those buildings (all but the church and rectory, are generally unused).
- 7) St. Margaret Mary bears only 8% of clergy expenses, with that projected to drop to zero following this fiscal year, and 0% of the lay directors' salaries for the Family of parishes.
- 8) St. Ann and St. Margaret Mary already exist within the same Family of Parishes and share clergy and some staff. The two parishes recommended for amalgamation are 1.3 miles apart on Galbraith Road and are contiguous in boundary. In conversations, many parishioners of St. Ann have expressed their willingness to welcome those who wish to come from St. Margaret Mary.

Taking into account the supreme law of the Church, i.e. the salvation of souls (cf. canon 1752), it is my belief that this action will better serve the Church's mission to evangelize and allow for more efficient administration of the temporal goods of the faithful.

Therefore, in virtue of my office as diocesan bishop, in accordance with canon 515 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, I hereby decree the extinctive union by amalgamation of Saint Margaret Mary Parish (North College Hill) into Saint Ann Parish (Groesbeck).

The intentions of the founders and donors regarding the temporal goods and patrimonial rights proper to the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary must be respected. Furthermore, the patrimonial goods, rights, and assets, including *bona sacra* and religious articles, as well as the obligations and liabilities of the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary shall belong to Saint Ann Parish, according to the norm of law (canon 121). The pastor of Saint Ann Parish will be responsible for the administration of all the temporal goods, in accordance with the universal law of the Church and the particular law of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

The territory of Saint Ann Parish shall include the territory of the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary. The new boundaries of Saint Ann Parish shall be:

On the north: from the overpass of Cheviot Road over Ronald Regan Highway, east along the Highway to Colrain Avenue, then north along Colrain Avenue to Compton Road, then east along Compton Road to Pippin Road, then south on Pippin Road to Mercury Avenue, then east on Mercury Avenue to Zodiac Drive, then south on Zodiac Drive to Neptune Drive, then east on Neptune drive until it hits the Arlington Memorial Gardens, then east on an airline to the Ronald Regan Highway and following the highway to the underpass with Clovernook Avenue, then east on an airline to Daly Road; then

On the east: southwest on an airline back to the Ronald Regan Highway, then south on an airline to Hollywood Avenue; then,

On the south: west on an airline to the intersection of Pippin Road and Banning Road, then south on an airline to Gazelle Court, then west on an airline to Colrain Avenue, then south on Colrain Avenue to the intersection with Byrneside Drive, then west on an airline to Blue Rock Road, then north on an airline to Banning Road, then west on Banning Road to Cheviot Road; then,

On the west: north on Cheviot Road to the point of beginning.

I further decree that Saint Ann Church will be the parochial church. Saint Margaret Mary Church, by a separate decree, is to be relegated to profane but non-sordid use.

The sacramental records of the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary shall be closed and remain in the care and custody of Saint Ann Parish to be properly preserved and safeguarded.

The parishioners of the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary are to associate themselves with their new proper territorial parish, Saint Ann Parish, or another parish of their choice in accordance with universal and archdiocesan law.

The rich history and legacy of the former parish of Saint Margaret Mary are to be held in high esteem and rightly honored. Furthermore, the people of Saint Ann Parish, under the leadership of their pastor, are to strive diligently, with God's help, to form a unified, harmonious congregation dedicated to fulfilling the mission that Jesus Christ committed to his disciples.

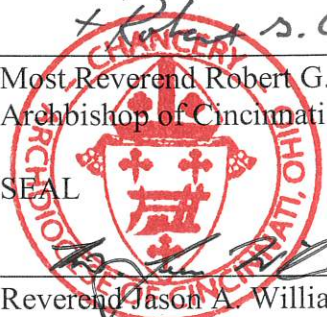
This decree becomes effective on July 1, 2026, and is to be published such that all members of Saint Margaret Mary Parish and Saint Ann Parish will be properly notified. Recourse may be made against this decree in accord with the norms of canon law.

Given from the Chancery of the Archdiocese,
Cincinnati, Ohio,
on the 8th day of June in the Year of Our Lord 2026,
Monday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time.



Most Reverend Robert G. Casey
Archbishop of Cincinnati

SEAL




Reverend Jason A. Williams, J.C.L.
Chancellor