



## **DECREE**

### **OF THE AMALGAMATION OF**

**SAINT ALOYSIUS PARISH,  
CARTHAGENA, OHIO,  
SAINT FRANCIS PARISH,  
CRANBERRY PRAIRIE, OHIO,  
SAINT BERNARD PARISH,  
BURKETTSVILLE, OHIO,  
AND  
SAINT WENDELIN PARISH,  
SAINT WENDELIN, OHIO**

### **INTO**

**SAINT HENRY PARISH,  
SAINT HENRY, OHIO**

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

Saint Aloysius Parish was founded in Carthagen, Ohio, in 1865; the present church building was completed in June of 1878. Saint Francis Parish was founded in Cranberry Prairie, Ohio, in 1858; the present church building was completed in September of 1906. Saint Bernard Parish was founded in Burkettsville, Ohio, in 1874; the present church building was completed in August of 1924. Saint Wendelin Parish was founded in Saint Wendelin, Ohio, in 1856; the present church building was completed in 1914. Saint Henry Parish was founded in Saint Henry, Ohio, in 1839; the present church building was completed in 1897. All five parishes have been served by the same pastor since 2004. For nearly two decades the five parishes have collaborated in pastoral ministry to the faithful of south central Mercer County and north central Darke County. In recent years many 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 Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, Saint Wendelin, and Saint Henry Parishes, with the recommendation of the members of the pastoral council and finance council of all five parishes, has proposed an extinctive union in which Saint Aloysius Parish, Saint Francis Parish, Saint Bernard Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish are amalgamated into Saint Henry Parish as a fitting means to both best meet the pastoral needs of the faithful and most effectively manage the resources at their disposal. Having consulted the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati on September 11, 2023, 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 Aloysius Parish, Saint Francis Parish, Saint Bernard Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish into Saint Henry Parish.

The following factors provide the just cause which motivates this decision:

- 1) the five parishes have worked together since 2004 to share clergy and expenses, centralize the administrative offices, provide common youth ministry and religious education programs, and establish joint sacramental formation and initiation;
- 2) uniting the parishes would simplify the determination of financial allocation and responsibility, compared to the current complicated financial agreements;
- 3) the members of these five parishes are generally united in their town and school district, resulting in a common territorial affinity which promotes social cohesion;
- 4) the administrative burdens on clergy and staff members would be reduced by such a unification;
- 5) tendencies towards parochialism would be reduced and greater unity among the faithful would be promoted;
- 6) this proposal would provide the opportunity for enhanced collaborative ministry and better utilization of clergy and lay personnel and allow for greater emphasis to be placed on evangelization.

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.

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 Aloysius Parish, Saint Francis Parish, Saint Bernard Parish, and Saint Wendelin Parish into Saint Henry Parish.

The intentions of the founders and donors regarding the temporal goods and patrimonial rights proper to the former parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin 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 parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin shall transfer to Saint Henry Parish, according to the norm of law (canon 121). The pastor of Saint Henry 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 Henry Parish shall expand to incorporate the territory of the former parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin. The new boundaries of Saint Henry Parish shall be:

On the north: from the northwest corner of section 18 Granville Township, Mercer County, east 2 ½ miles to the center of the north line of section 16; then north ½ mile to the center of section 9; then east 1 ¼ mile; then north ½ mile; then east ¼ mile; then northeast to the northeast corner of section 2 Butler Township, Mercer County; then north ½ mile; then east ½ mile; then north ½ mile; then east ¾ mile; then,

On the east: south 1 mile; then east 3/8 mile; then south 1 mile; then east 3/8 mile; then south ½ mile; then east ¼ mile; then south 1 mile; then west ½ mile; then south ¼ mile; then west ½ mile; then south ¾ mile; then west 3/8 mile; then south ¾ mile; then east ¼ mile; then south ¼ mile; then east 5/8 mile; then south 1 ½ mile to the Greenville Treaty line; then east 1/8 mile along the Greenville Treaty line; then south 1 1/8 mile; then west ¾ mile; then south ½ mile to the Mercer-Darke County line; then west 1 ½ mile along the county line; then south 2 miles; then west ½ mile; then south 1 ½ mile to the center of section 24 Wabash Township, Darke County; then west ½ mile; then south 2 ½ miles along the east line of sections 23, 26, and 35 Allen Township; then,

On the south: west 4 miles along the south line of sections 35, 34, 33, and 32 Allen Township; then,

On the west: north 3 miles along the west line of sections 32, 29, and 20 Allen Township; then east ½ mile; then north 3 miles to Darke-Mercer County line; then east 1/8 mile along Darke-Mercer County line; then north ½ mile; then east ½ mile; then north 1 mile; then west 1 mile; then north ¾ mile; then west 1 mile; then north ½ mile; then west 1 1/8 mile; then north 1 1/8 mile; then east 1 1/8 mile; then north ¾ mile; then east 1 mile; then north 1 mile to the point of the beginning.

I further decree that Saint Henry Church will be the parochial church of Saint Henry Parish. Saint Aloysius Church, Saint Francis Church, Saint Bernard Church, and Saint Wendelin Church will all continue to function as subsidiary churches.

The sacramental records of the former parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin shall be closed and transferred to Saint Henry Parish where they are to be properly preserved and safeguarded. Any sacraments which take place at Saint Aloysius Church, Saint Francis Church, Saint Bernard Church, and Saint Wendelin Church are to be recorded in the sacramental registers of Saint Henry Parish.

The parishioners of the former parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin are to associate themselves with their proper territorial parish, Saint Henry Parish, or another parish of their choice in accordance with universal and archdiocesan law.

The rich history and legacy of the former parishes of Saint Aloysius, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, and Saint Wendelin are to be held in high esteem and rightly honored. Furthermore, the people of Saint Henry 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 as of January 1, 2024, and is to be published immediately such that all members of Saint Aloysius Parish, Saint Francis Parish, Saint Bernard Parish, Saint Wendelin Parish, and Saint Henry Parish will be properly notified. Recourse may be taken against this decree in accord with the norms of canon law.

Given from the Chancery of the Archdiocese,  
Cincinnati, Ohio,  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of October in the Year of Our Lord 2023,  
Memorial of the Guardian Angels.

  
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Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr  
Archbishop of Cincinnati

SEAL

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