

# DECREE

## OF THE MERGER OF

### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA AND SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA INTO SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Immaculate Conception Parish was founded in the City of Philadelphia in 1902 and has served the faithful of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for one hundred and ten years. Saint Francis of Assisi Parish was founded in the City of Philadelphia in 1899 and has served the faithful of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for one hundred and thirteen years. As the result of an Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning initiative, a proposal to merge these parishes with the neighboring Saint Vincent De Paul Parish was studied and discussed with committees from all three parishes, with the Congregation of the Mission, which staffs the parishes, and with the appropriate Archdiocesan offices. Throughout this process, sufficient information regarding the proposal was gathered, and sufficient consultation was conducted with the members of Immaculate Conception Parish, Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, and Saint Vincent de Paul Parish.

The following just causes suggest that Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish be merged into Saint Vincent de Paul Parish:

- 1) to provide more effectively for the pastoral needs of the faithful of Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, which have greatly declined in population in recent years;
- 2) to assure the vitality of parish life for Saint Vincent de Paul Parish;
- 3) to provide for a better stewardship of resources; and,
- 4) to provide for the optimum use of clergy and lay personnel.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescriptions of canon 122 of the Code of Canon Law, having judged that sufficient just causes are present and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired, and having consulted the Council of Priests in accord with canon 515, §2, I hereby **DECREE** that Immaculate Conception Parish, Philadelphia and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Philadelphia be merged into Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Philadelphia.

The new boundaries of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish are Washington Lane to Stenton Avenue; to Wister Street; to Laveer Street; to 21<sup>st</sup> Street; to Nedro Avenue; to 20<sup>th</sup> Street; to Belfield Avenue; to Courtland Street; to 18<sup>th</sup> Street; to Winghocking Street; to 16<sup>th</sup> Street; to Cayuga Street; to Clarissa Street (both sides); to Roberts Avenue (both sides); to Wissahickon Avenue; to Wissahickon Drive; to Wissahickon Creek (at Rittenhouse Street); to Walnut Lane; to Park Lane (exclusive); to Wissahickon Avenue; to West Johnson Street; to Wayne Avenue; to Washington Lane.

Parishioners of Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish will become members of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish. The rich legacy and history of Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish are to be promoted and honored. Together, all of the parishioners are encouraged to unite the newly merged parish through union with Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The intention or will of donors, as well as any acquired rights, have been examined and taken into consideration, especially regarding the allocation of goods and the obligation of debts. The goods of Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, including their property and treasury, as well as any debts, shall be assigned to Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Philadelphia, in accord with canon 122. The sacramental registers of Immaculate Conception Parish and Saint Francis of Assisi Parish shall be preserved at Saint Vincent de Paul Rectory.

This decree becomes effective as of July 1, 2012, prior to which it is to be communicated to the parishioners and to the Faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the eleventh day of April, in the Year of Our Lord 2012.

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M.Cap.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia

Reverend Monsignor Gerard C. Mesure  
Chancellor

# DECREE

## OF THE RELEGATION OF

### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

#### TO PROFANE BUT NOT SORDID USE

Due to the deteriorating condition of Immaculate Conception Church, Philadelphia and a lack of the funding necessary to repair and maintain the church, consideration must be given as to whether sufficient grave causes exist for the relegation of Immaculate Conception Church to profane but not sordid use.

The following grave causes suggest that the church be so relegated and no longer be used for divine worship:

- 1) Immaculate Conception Church has been examined by experts who have determined that the building is in need of extensive repairs. Most notably the heating system for the main body of the church is not operational, the roof needs extensive repairs, and the church windows have leaks which have resulted in water damage to the interior of the church;
- 2) Immaculate Conception Parish does not have the resources to repair and maintain the church building. The parish has a debt of \$130,427 and an effective annual operating deficit of \$202,520. While Immaculate Conception parish is being merged into Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Philadelphia, that parish is also unable to pay for the needed repairs as it is also in debt and has only a small operational surplus of \$6,978.
- 3) there is no other source of funding and the financial burden of repairing and maintaining the church would cause important pastoral programs of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, such as much needed outreach to the poor of the area and educational efforts, to suffer due to lack of funds;
- 4) the church building does not have any particular architectural, historical, or artistic significance; and,
- 5) the people who have been attending Immaculate Conception Church are in reasonably close proximity to Saint Vincent de Paul Church.

Accordingly, in virtue of the precepts of canon 1212 and canon 1222, §2 of the Code of Canon Law, having judged that sufficient grave causes are present and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired, having consulted with the Congregation of the Mission who staff the

church, and having consulted with the Council of Priests, I hereby **DECREE** that Immaculate Conception Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, be relegated to profane but not sordid use.

This decree is effective as of July 1, 2012, and is to be communicated to the members of Immaculate Conception Parish and to the faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the eleventh day of April, in the Year of Our Lord 2012.

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M.Cap.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia

Reverend Monsignor Gerard C. Mesure  
Chancellor