

# **DECREE**

## **OF THE MERGER OF**

**SAINT JOAN OF ARC PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA,  
AND**

**MATER DOLOROSA PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
AND**

**SAINT JOACHIM PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA,**

**WITH**

**HOLY INNOCENTS PARISH, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was founded as a territorial parish in 1919. Mater Dolorosa Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was founded as a personal parish for Italian speaking people in 1911. Saint Joachim Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was founded as a territorial parish in 1845. Holy Innocents Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was founded as a territorial parish in 1927. As the result of an Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning initiative, a proposal to merge Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, and Saint Joachim Parish into the neighboring Holy Innocents Parish was studied and discussed with committees from all of the parishes and with the appropriate archdiocesan offices. Throughout this process, sufficient information regarding the proposal was gathered, and consultation was conducted with members of Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joachim Parish, and Holy Innocents Parish.

The following just causes suggest that Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, and Saint Joachim Parish be merged into Holy Innocents Parish:

- 1) to provide more effectively for the pastoral needs of the faithful of Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, Saint Joachim Parish, and Holy Innocents Parish, several of which have declined in population in recent years;
- 2) to enhance evangelization efforts and to improve the vitality of parish life for the people of Saint Joan of Arc, Mater Dolorosa, Saint Joachim, and Holy Innocents Parishes;
- 3) to address circumstances in which there is no longer a need for an Italian personal parish in the area;

- 4) to address serious financial difficulties in the parishes and to provide for a better stewardship of resources; and,
- 5) to provide for the optimum use of clergy and lay personnel.

Accordingly, 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** an extinctive union by which Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mater Dolorosa Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Saint Joachim Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania will be merged into Holy Innocents Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The boundaries of Holy Innocents Parish are hereby altered to the following:

Frankford Creek from the junction of Penn-Central Railroad (Oxford Branch); to Friends Hospital property line; to Roosevelt Blvd.; to Adams Ave.; to Arrott St.; to Horrocks St.; to Wakeling St.; to Tacony State Rd.; to Aramingo Ave.; to Venango St.; to Tulip St.; to Allegheny Ave.; to Emerald St.; to Westmoreland St.; to C St.; to Penn Central R.R. (Oxford Branch); TO Frankford Creek.

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 Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, and Saint Joachim Parish, including their property and treasury, as well as any debts, are assigned to Holy Innocents Parish.

The rich legacy and history of Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, and Saint Joachim Parish are to be promoted and honored. Saint Joan of Arc Church, Mater Dolorosa Church, and Saint Joachim Church will remain open as a worship sites for Holy Innocents Parish.

The sacramental registers of Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Mater Dolorosa Parish, and Saint Joachim Parish shall be preserved at Holy Innocents Rectory. Holy Innocents Parish will provide pastoral care to Italian speaking people in the area, as needed and insofar as is possible.

This decree becomes effective as of July 1, 2013, 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 29<sup>th</sup> day of May in the Year of Our Lord 2013.

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

**SEAL**

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Reverend Monsignor Gerard C. Mesure  
Chancellor