

Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Archbishop
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

DECREE

OF THE MERGER OF

**OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS PARISH ,
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA,**

WITH

**NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY PARISH,
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1885 to serve German speaking Catholics in the Port Richmond section of the City of Philadelphia. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1882. As the result of an Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning initiative, a proposal to merge Our Lady Help of Christians Parish into the territorial parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was studied and discussed with committees from both 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 Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish.

The following just causes suggest that Our Lady Help of Christians Parish be merged into Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish :

- 1) to provide more effectively for the pastoral needs of the faithful of Our Lady Help of Christians Parish which has declined sharply in population over the years and no longer serves a predominately German speaking community;
- 2) to enhance evangelization efforts and the vitality of parish life for the people of Our Lady Help of Christians and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parishes by combining parish ministries and other parish activities;
- 3) to provide for a better stewardship of resources so as to address financial difficulties in both of the parishes, which are facing deficits and carrying large debts;
- 4) to provide for the best use of clergy and lay personnel and to prepare the parish communities for an administrative partnership with the other parishes in the area.

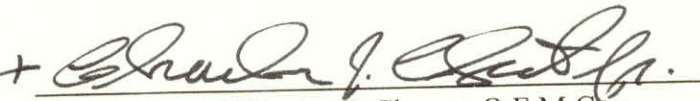
Accordingly, having judged that sufficient just causes are present and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired, and having consulted the Council of Priests in accord with canon 515, §2 on December 18, 2016, I hereby **DECREE** an extinctive union by which Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania will be merged into Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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 Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, including their property and treasury, as well as any debts, shall be assigned to Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish.

Our Lady Help of Christians Church will remain open as a worship site for Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish will provide for the pastoral care of any German speaking people of the area. The sacramental registers of Our Lady Help of Christians Parish shall be preserved at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Rectory.

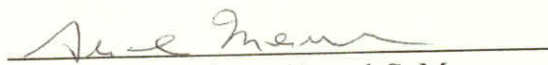
This decree becomes effective as of July 1, 2016, prior to which it is to be communicated to the parishioners and to the Faithful of the Archdiocese in an appropriate manner. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, on the 20th day of January in the Year of Our Lord 2016.

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

SEAL



Reverend Monsignor Gerard C. Mesure
Chancellor