



DECREE

The merger of
St. Mary Parish of Geneva, Minnesota
with St. Columbanus Parish of Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

St. Mary Parish of Geneva, Minnesota, was founded in 1858, serving the faithful of the area for 158 years. In 2011 the Diocese of Winona, with the assistance of professional consultants, embarked upon Vision 2016: a comprehensive visioning and planning process aimed at providing opportunities to enhance the pastoral care of the faithful, address shortages in clergy, and evaluate current parish structures in light of changing demographic trends. The project employed extensive collaboration among clergy and lay leaders throughout the Diocese. The insights drawn from multiple deanery level meetings, the recommendations of pastoral planning experts, and other relevant data was presented to a working committee in 2014, which subsequently recommended merging 21 of the 115 parishes. The proposal was released publically on Feb 1, 2015, and members of the faithful of St. Mary Parish and St. Columbanus Parish were asked to make known their needs and desires about the proposed merger. Guidance was solicited from the Presbyteral Council throughout the pastoral planning process.

On May 19, 2016, the Presbyteral Council provided consultation, in accord with canon 515, §§2, 3, concerning the proposal that St. Mary Parish be merged (*unio extinctiva*) into St. Columbanus Parish. Upon full discussion, at which time due consideration was given to reasons for and against the proposed merger, and with opportunity to suggest alternate courses of action, members of the Presbyteral Council expressed unanimous agreement in favor of the proposed merger.

The following just causes suggest that St. Mary Parish be merged into St. Columbanus Parish:

- 1) The declining number of faithful attending Mass and the limited quantity of additional sacramental experiences;
- 2) The enhancement of collaborative ministry and to ensure the best utilization of priest personnel;
- 3) The recent and projected shifts in populations, moving from rural to urban settings;
- 4) A consolidation of human resources directed toward strengthening the quality of the liturgy and encouraging fuller active participation;
- 5) To better effect the preaching and spread of the Gospel.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescription of canon 121 and 515, §2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, having judged that just causes are present, that the intentions of donors and any other acquired rights have been examined and given due consideration, and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired,

**I HEREBY DECREE AN EXTINCTIVE UNION BY WHICH
ST. MARY PARISH OF GENEVA, MINNESOTA
BE MERGED INTO
ST. COLUMBANUS PARISH OF BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA.**

Furthermore, the newly established territorial boundaries of St. Columbanus Parish are to be:

Beginning in the northeast corner at the intersection of 108th Street and 150th Avenue, south on 150th Avenue to Dodge Mower Road, west on Dodge Mower Road to 550th Avenue, south on 550th Avenue to 290th Street, west on a continuous line that overlaps 290th Street to Interstate 35, north on Interstate 35 to an intersection where a continuous line that extends west from 138th Street, east on a continuous line that overlaps 138th Street to SE 89th Avenue, north on SE 89th Avenue to 108th Street, east on 108th Street to the beginning point.

Upon the completion of the transfer of such assets and liabilities, the civil corporation of the St. Mary Parish shall take such actions at civil law as are necessary to dissolve itself. Furthermore, any other patrimony, including sacramental records, deaths, and items or documents of historical or spiritual significance shall be transferred to St. Columbanus Parish.

This decree becomes effective September 30, 2016. A copy of this decree is to be sent to the pastor of St. Mary Parish and St. Columbanus Parish and its contents is to be communicated at all of the Masses of obligation on the weekend of Saturday, September 3, 2016, and Sunday, September 4, 2016. Furthermore, this decree is to be published on the diocesan website. Any legitimate party, considering himself aggrieved by this decree, retains the right to request emendation or revocation within ten (10) useful days (c. 1734 §§1, 2).

Given in the Diocese of Winona on this thirty-first day of August in the year of Our Lord 2016.



The Most Reverend John M. Quinn
Bishop of Winona



The Very Reverend Glenn K. Frerichs
Chancellor

SEAL

