



The Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
1400 N. Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367  
317-236-1403

## Decree

Whereas the parishes of St. Joseph Parish of St. Joseph Hill, Clark County and St. Paul Parish of Sellersburg have shared in the operation of St. Paul School since 1999; and

Whereas the parishes have collaborated in order to expand the school building; and

Whereas the parishes have shared staff members beginning in 2010; and

Whereas the merger of the parishes would allow the parish that would result from the merger to better administer personnel, financial, and material resources and thus facilitate the mission of the Church in the territory currently served by the two parishes; and

Whereas the merger of the parishes would offer expanded services and opportunities for spiritual growth to the parishioners of the currently existing parishes while eliminating inefficient and counterproductive duplication of services; and

Whereas in 2004, during the tenure of my predecessor as Archbishop of Indianapolis, Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, OSB, the Archdiocese formulated a parish staffing plan that provided that St. Joseph Parish and St. Paul Parish would share a single pastor; and

Whereas in 2006 the two parishes established a joint committee called the Joint Vision 2020 Committee to consider the relationship between the two parishes; and

Whereas that committee issued a final report which recommended that the parishes be merged into a single parish with one campus and with a single parish school serving pre-school through eighth grade students; and

Whereas this plan was approved by the pastoral councils of both parishes, ratified by the pastors of both parishes, and approved by Archbishop Buechlein; and

Whereas the parishes entered into an agreement to purchase a large parcel of land to serve as a possible site for a new parish campus, and whereas the option to purchase the property must be exercised by November of 2014; and

Whereas the parishes currently share a single pastor, Fr. Thomas Clegg, who was appointed to the pastorates of both parishes in 2013; and

Whereas the households of the parishes were sent a survey in January 2014 seeking their opinion concerning the question of whether the parishes should be merged; and

Whereas 74.8% of the respondents to this survey voted in favor of merging the parishes; and

Whereas on February 23, 2014 a joint parish assembly was held with 355 members of the parishes in attendance; and

Whereas 78% of those in attendance voted that they could accept the merger of the parishes; and

Whereas the merger of the parishes would allow for a mass schedule which would encourage fuller participation in the liturgy; and

Whereas the joint pastoral councils of St. Joseph Parish and St. Paul Parish petitioned me to erect a new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) in the territory of the currently existing parishes and to merge the existing parishes into the new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) in an extinctive union; and

Whereas I convened the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council to advise me concerning the question of whether a new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) should be created pursuant to this petition; and

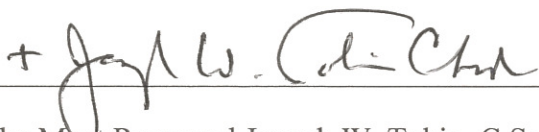
Whereas the Presbyteral Council, after full discussion and opportunity to suggest alternate courses of action, by unanimous consultative vote recommended to me the merger of St. Joseph Parish of St. Joseph Hill and St. Paul Parish of Sellersburg and the erection of a new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) in the territory currently belonging to the parishes;

I, Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., in my capacity as Diocesan Bishop and Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, having in mind my responsibility to best address the spiritual needs of the people of St. Joseph and St. Paul Parishes specifically and the needs of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis generally, hereby decree:

1. A new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) is to be erected that will be comprised of the territory of the currently existing parishes of St. Joseph Parish of St. Joseph Hill and St. Paul Parish of Sellersburg.
2. The new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) will come into being on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014.

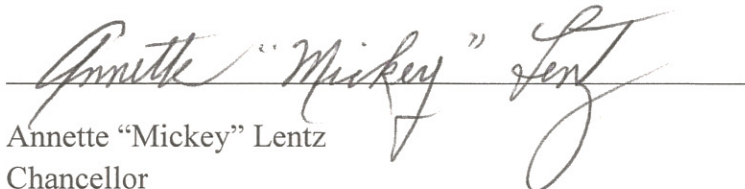
3. The public juridic person of the parish, which is created by operation of law, shall take such actions at civil law as are necessary to create a civil not for profit parish corporation pursuant to the current practice of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the law of the State of Indiana.
4. The status of the currently existing parishes and the disposition of the assets and liabilities of those parishes will be determined by the provisions of canon and civil law and by decrees specific to each of the two parishes.
5. The new parish (to be known as St. John Paul II Catholic Church) will receive such assets and liabilities of the currently existing parishes as are apportioned to it by the provisions of canon and civil law and by the specific decrees concerning each of those parishes.
6. The number and location of the parish Saturday anticipation masses and Sunday masses shall be determined by the pastor, administrator, or parish life coordinator with the advice and consent of the Ordinary.
7. This decree is to be published to the pastor of the two currently existing parishes, and that pastor is both to notify the parishioners of the contents of this decree and to make this decree available for inspection and copying at the parish offices of the two currently existing parishes.
8. This decree is to be published in the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Criterion*.
9. This decree is also to be published to the Archdiocesan website.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis this 11<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2014.



---

The Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Indianapolis



---

Annette "Mickey" Lentz  
Chancellor