



DECREE

DESIGNATING THE PARISH CHURCH OF OUR MOTHER OF SORROWS PARISH (ERIE)

History

By Decree of the Most Reverend Donald W. Trautman, Bishop of Erie, effective January 1, 2009, Holy Family Parish, Saint Ann Parish, and Saint Casimir Parish in Erie were all merged together in an extinctive union, and from them, Our Mother of Sorrows Parish was erected.

Prior to that extinctive union, Holy Family church had served as the parish church of Holy Family Parish. Likewise, Saint Ann church had served as the parish church of Saint Ann Parish, and Saint Casimir Church had served as the parish church of Saint Casimir Parish.

Current Situation

The Decree erecting Our Mother of Sorrows Parish specified that each of the aforementioned former parish churches would remain open for divine worship, but it did not indicate which church would serve as the parish church. As a result, all three churches lack the status of a parish church, with its attached rights and obligations in law, resulting in the anomaly of a parish possessing three secondary churches and no parish church.

As a part of a comprehensive pastoral planning process involving extensive study, collaboration, and dialogue throughout the diocese, together with an analysis of objective data regarding demographic shifts and population trends for individual parishes, specific communities and regions, I have promulgated particular diocesan law by which all parish Masses on Sundays and holy days of obligation, as well as on the preceding evenings, are to take place within a lawfully designated parish church or a lawfully designated mission church. In order to implement the provisions of this norm in Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, as well as to provide clarity as to which church possesses the rights and duties of a parish church, it is now necessary to indicate which church that will be.

I therefore brought the matter of the designation of a parish church for Our Mother of Sorrows Parish before the Presbyteral Council on March 9, 2016. With the support of the

Presbyteral Council, I announced on April 12, 2016 a preliminary plan to designate Saint Ann church as the parish church.

I specified a time period in which I would welcome feedback in response to this preliminary proposal. I requested input and advice from the pastor of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, from the parishioners themselves, from the Vicar Forane and the Vicar General, and from those responsible for overseeing the development of the pastoral plan. Concern surfaced that although Saint Ann church is the largest of the three, it is not handicapped accessible and lacks the parking which is available at the other churches. All things considered, Saint Casimir church is in good physical condition, has available parking, and is handicapped accessible. Furthermore, the presence of Holy Family School will allow for the continued regular use of Holy Family church during the week, and the celebration of the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite will allow for the continued regular use of Saint Anne church on Sunday mornings, so that designating Saint Casimir as the parish church will guarantee that, at least for the foreseeable future, all three churches will continue to be in regular use.

In light of this additional information, all of which was shared with the Presbyteral Council, I asked the council members for their advice on a modified proposal to designate Saint Casimir church as the parish church for Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, for which they expressed unanimous support on June 28, 2016.

All of the requirements of canons 50 and 51, as well as the processes indicated in canons 127 and 166, have been fulfilled.

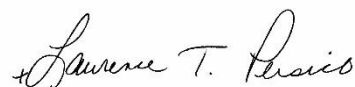
Therefore, having first and foremost before my eyes the need for a better means to provide for the care of souls and to provide the faithful of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish with a lawfully designated parish church, with both the rights and duties which such a designation imparts, and considering the condition of the three churches owned by the parish, the determination of a means to maintain all three churches in regular use at least for the foreseeable future, and the numerous comments and input from all concerned, I hereby decree the following:

1. Saint Casimir church shall be the lawfully designated parish church of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish.
2. Holy Family church shall remain a secondary church – without mission status – of Our Mother of Sorrows parish. It is to remain open to the faithful, including the community of Holy Family School, at least occasionally for sacred worship, whether public or private (cf. can. 1214), but in accord with diocesan law, Masses are not to be celebrated there on Sundays or holy days of obligation or the evenings preceding them.

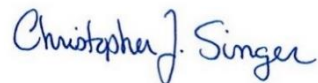
4. Saint Ann church shall remain a secondary church – without mission status – of Our Mother of Sorrows parish. It is to remain open to the faithful at least occasionally for sacred worship, whether public or private (cf. can. 1214). In a derogation from diocesan law, permission is hereby granted for the continued regular celebration of the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite both on Sundays and holy days of obligation in Saint Ann church. This permission does not extend to the ordinary form of the Roman Rite.
5. Furthermore, Mass is to be celebrated in Holy Family church every year on the solemnity of the anniversary of the church's dedication and on the solemnity of the church's title, in accord with current liturgical norms (cf. cann. 1167 §2 and 1168 of the former Code of Canon Law, and can. 2 of the present Code). Likewise, Mass is to be celebrated every year in Saint Ann church on the solemnity of the anniversary of the church's dedication and on the solemnity of the church's title. If such an observance is impeded by another date of higher rank according to the Roman calendar, the impeded solemnity is to be transferred to the first available date thereafter.

This decree is effective February 13, 2017, anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery
of the Diocese of Erie
on this 20th day of September, 2016



The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie



The Reverend Christopher J. Singer, JCL
Chancellor