



The Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
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## Decree

Whereas my predecessor, Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, OSB, instituted a process to assess the pastoral needs of the parishes of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis; and

Whereas this process, known as Connected in the Spirit, was designed to consider the needs of the parishes according to deaneries; and

Whereas it was deemed beneficial to consider the parishes of the Connersville Deanery; and

Whereas, as part of this process, information was elicited concerning both the current condition and pastoral needs of the three parishes linked by a common pastor and commonly known as the “Richmond Catholic Community” of Richmond, Indiana; and;

Whereas information concerning the pastoral needs of the people of St. Mary Parish, one of the three parishes linked by a common pastor that are commonly known as the Richmond Catholic Community, was made available to both the Archdiocesan Planning Commission and to myself as the Archbishop and Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis; and

Whereas the information concerning the condition of the parish and the pastoral needs of its people demonstrated that:

- St. Mary Parish has been part of the Richmond Catholic Community for approximately two decades; and
- as a member of the Richmond Catholic Community, St. Mary Parish has shared a pastor, parochial vicar, and pastoral team with St. Andrew Parish and Holy Family Parish; and
- the three parishes of the Richmond Catholic Community have functioned *de facto* as a single parish for approximately two decades; and
- the system in place, while having many pastoral advantages, imposes serious administrative burdens upon the parish and staff, including:
  - difficulties in administering the funds received in Sunday collections, since the members of the three parishes of the Richmond Catholic Community freely attend any of the three churches and monies collected at one of the three parishes are often designated for another of the three parishes, thus requiring the expenditure of considerable time in separating funds and ensuring that they are credited to the correct parish;

- the maintenance of separate financial councils per the norms of canon law;
- the maintenance of separate bank and financial accounts for each of the three parishes;
- the necessity of apportioning to each parish the expenses incurred by the entire Richmond Catholic Community; and
- it is pastorally advantageous to the members of the three parishes of the Richmond Catholic Community, and specifically to the members of the current St. Mary Parish, that the *de facto* functioning of the Richmond Catholic Community as a single parish be recognized *de jure* by the creation of a single parish out of the three parishes of the Richmond Catholic Community; and

Whereas the Archdiocesan Planning Commission proposed the merger, canonically known as an extinctive union, between St. Andrew Parish, Holy Family Parish and St. Mary Parish, with the extinction of all three parishes and the erection of a new parish to be comprised of the members and territory of the extinguished parishes; and

Whereas the unification of the parishes would allow for stronger evangelization, faith formation, and vocations programs, as well as more effective administration and stewardship of the resources of the unified parish; and

Whereas an extinctive union of the parishes would also allow for a prudent allocation of limited resources and personnel, particularly priests; and

Whereas I convened the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese and sought its counsel concerning the manner in which the pastoral needs of the people of St. Mary Parish might best be addressed; and

Whereas the Presbyteral Council, after fully considering the issue, recommended by consultative vote that St. Mary Parish be extinguished and merged into a newly erected parish; and

Whereas, upon my own consideration of the facts and the recommendation of the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council, I have reached the conclusion that the recommendations are sound and supported by the facts;

I, Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, having considered the advice of the Archdiocesan Planning Commission and the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council, and having in mind my responsibility to best meet the spiritual needs of the people of St. Mary Parish of Richmond in specific and the spiritual needs of the Connersville Deanery and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis generally, now hereby decree that:

1. St. Mary Parish of Richmond, Indiana is to be merged into a parish to be erected consisting of the people and territory of the currently existing parishes of the Richmond Catholic Community on July 1, 2016.
2. The public juridical person of St. Mary Parish is to be extinguished on the same date, or, if the matter should be appealed, upon the resolution of any such appeal.

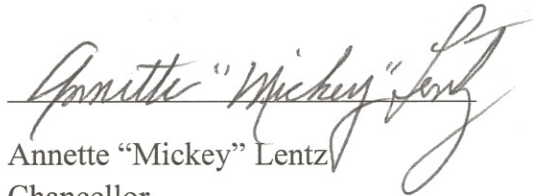


3. Upon the extinction of the public juridical person of St. Mary Parish and the unification of its people into the parish to be erected, the civil corporation of St. Mary Parish shall immediately transfer all assets and liabilities of the corporation, whether legal or equitable, to the civil corporation of the newly erected parish.
4. Upon the completion of the transfer of such assets and liabilities, the civil corporation of St. Mary Parish shall take such actions at civil law as are necessary to dissolve itself.
5. This decree is to be published to the pastor of St. Mary Parish.
6. The parishioners of St. Mary Parish and the parishioners of Holy Family Parish and St. Andrew Parish are to be given notice of this decree upon its receipt by the pastor of the parishes. Copies of this decree are to be made available for inspection at the offices of all three parishes, and the parishioners shall be given notice as soon as is possible after its receipt by the pastor.
7. This decree is to be published in the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Criterion*.
8. This decree is to be posted to the website of the Archdiocese.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Archdiocese on this 4<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016.



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

  
Annette "Mickey" Lentz  
Chancellor

