



## DECREE

### IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN

#### **An extinctive union of a public juridic person in virtue of c. 121 (CIC '83)**

The Catholic Faithful of Bensenville have been served by the **Parish of St. Charles Borromeo, Bensenville IL** since June 5, 1959. From that time, many people have heard the Word of God, worshiped, received the Sacraments and carried out the works of charity in this Parish. The principal motivation for modifying this Parish is a concern for souls and the good of the faithful—with our vision of *Catechesis, Evangelization, Faith into Action*, the focus is on the mission of Jesus Christ rather than on the preservation of our buildings so that our Church can continue to produce great fruit.

Considering both the good of the whole Diocese as well as this particular Parish, the decision of the **union of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bensenville IL with Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, Elmhurst IL** (both in DuPage County and 2.7 miles of geographical distance from one another), and thereby forming one Parish, Mary Queen of Heaven, has come after due deliberation with my restructuring committee. This thorough process began in late July 2022 after convening meetings regarding the vibrancy and sustainability of parishes and schools in specific geographic areas of the Diocese. Over subsequent meetings, members of the committee reviewed diocesan-wide statistics, and the following trends were discovered: the number of clergy has significantly decreased—there are 41% fewer diocesan priests as compared to 1970 and 66% fewer order priests; the number of seminarians has significantly decreased—there are 84% fewer seminarians today as compared to 1970; the overall Catholic population within the Diocese of Joliet has decreased by 17%—there is a 62% decrease in infant baptisms since 2000, a 45% decrease in First Communion since 2000, a 28% decrease in Confirmations, and a 68% decrease in Catholic Marriages since 1990. In its review, the committee has also considered other trends, such as Mass attendance, parish and school financial health, etc.

The Parish of St. Charles Borromeo was assessed, and having compared it to other parishes in the same deanery it is evident that the administration of the Sacraments is at an average of only 2.4%, and it contains the lowest number of registered parishioners. Furthermore, the Parish has had long standing financial problems as well as increasing structural and maintenance needs which the parish lacks the means to address. The Parish has been operating at a loss since 2017.

The Parish of Mary Queen of Heaven, being geographically nearby, having a low number of administered sacraments in the deanery, being financially viable, having a similar cultural demographic, and having the physical space for the faithful to worship and receive the

Sacraments, the decision was made to unite the Parish of St. Charles Borromeo with Mary Queen of Heaven.

In its assessment, members of the restructuring committee met with the pastor of St. Charles Borromeo and members of the Parish Council a total of three times (cf. can. 50). With clarity and transparency, they were informed that a restructuring of the parish was going to occur and provided the possible canonical scenarios. Furthermore, two parish listening sessions were held at the Parish, one on March 15, 2023 and the other on March 25, 2023. A PowerPoint presentation with quantitative data on the Diocese, the Eastern DuPage Deanery and St. Charles Borromeo Parish was presented. The Parish Council was provided the opportunity to submit written recommendations regarding the possible canonical outcomes for the Parish. These were reviewed with prayerful and thorough consideration. Additionally, members of the restructuring committee met with the Pastor of Mary Queen of Heaven Parish on October 21, 2022 and again on February 23, 2023. Thereafter, this same Pastor met with the Parish Council of Mary Queen of Heaven.

THEREFORE, I, The Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks, Bishop of the Diocese of Joliet-in-Illinois, in accord with the canons 121, 127 §1 & §3, 166, 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law (CIC '83), convened the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Joliet on May 3, 2023 at the Blanchette Catholic Center in Crest Hill Illinois. Having heard the Presbyteral Council at the same meeting, which voted unanimously in favor of all the points outlined in the proposal I, after invoking the Holy Spirit,

***hereby decree the following:***

1. Effective June 30, 2023, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 1135 Daniel Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106, will unite with Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, 426 N. West Avenue, Elmhurst, IL 60126, whereby the juridic person of St. Charles Borromeo will be extinguished and only the juridic person of Mary Queen of Heaven will remain;
2. St. Charles Borromeo will, therefore, be a church of Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, and Mary Queen of Heaven Church will remain the Parish Church;
3. Each and all the parishioners of St. Charles Borromeo will be fully and equally parishioners of Mary Queen of Heaven;
4. Subject to the intention of the founders and donors, with due regard for acquired rights, the goods and patrimonial rights of the extinguished parish will be those of the remaining Parish, Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, whereas any obligations with which they have been burdened will be those of the Diocese of Joliet;
5. If St. Charles Borromeo's real estate is ever sold, the Diocese will be reimbursed for all forgiven diocesan debt, assumed diocesan debt and expenses incurred by the Diocese in maintaining the property from the time of its closure until the time it is sold. The remaining proceeds of the sale will go to Mary Queen of Heaven Parish;
6. The sacramental records and other materials relevant to historical research concerning the extinguished Parish will be transferred to the Archives of the Diocese of Joliet;

7. The notification of this decree shall be communicated to the Pastor of St. Charles Borromeo and Mary Queen of Heaven as well as to their parishioners. Notification will be given through parish bulletins and the official website of the Diocese of Joliet.

*Before hierarchical recourse may be taken against this decree, a petition to reconsider or amend the decree must be sent or delivered to me within ten (10) useful days from notification of the decree (CIC '83 c. 1734 §2)*

Given and effective on this 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2023  
Blanchette Catholic Center  
Crest Hill, IL



*+ Ronald A. Hicks*

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Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks  
Bishop of the Diocese of Joliet-in-Illinois

*David Salvato*

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David Salvato, JCD  
Chancellor