

DECREE

Uniting Sacred Heart Parish in Marlborough, New Hampshire

with

Saint Bernard Parish in Keene, New Hampshire

Sacred Heart Parish has served the Catholic faithful of Marlborough since 1886. During that time, many people have heard the Word of God, have worshiped and received the sacraments of the Church in this parish. Now, in an effort to strengthen the preaching of the Gospel and to ensure the vitality of parish life, with concern for the best stewardship of resources and the right of the people of God to receive assistance from the Church, especially the Word of God, spiritual sustenance, the sacraments, and the continuation of ministries, it is necessary to make new provisions for the spiritual care of the parishioners of this parish.

To that end, having asked parishioners to make known their needs and desires, having received the recommendations of the members of Cluster Task Force #15 with two lay liaisons and pastors from each parish, the Dean of the Monadnock Deanery, the Long Range Planning Commission, the laity in the area and after consultation with the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Manchester and the Finance Council, and in accord with canon 515 §2 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, I hereby:

1. Suppress and unite Sacred Heart Parish in Marlborough, New Hampshire with Saint Bernard Parish in Keene, New Hampshire to form one territorial parish. The union shall take effect at midnight at the end of Saturday, June 24, 2006 This unified parish shall include the membership of the present Saint Bernard Parish and the former Sacred Heart Parish, and the current Saint Bernard Church edifice shall be the place of worship for the unified parish community.
2. The new boundaries of St. Bernard Parish in Keene shall include, in addition to the current boundaries of St. Bernard Parish, the boundaries of the former

Sacred Heart Parish in Marlborough, which include the entire incorporated community of Marlboro to the point where it touches the town lines of Dublin, Jaffrey, Keene and Troy.

3. Establish that the name of the present Saint Bernard Parish shall remain unchanged so that the newly unified parish shall be called Saint Bernard Parish.

This decision is based upon a number of components, including a decline in the Catholic worshiping community in the Marlborough area, the proximity of the worshiping communities and the churches, the size of the parishes, the desire to avoid duplication of services and programs in a small geographic area, the costs associated with necessary repairs and maintenance to aging structures, the fostering of unity, the enhancement of collaborative ministry, and the best use of available priest personnel.

All parish registers containing the records of baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, marriage, and deaths preserved at Sacred Heart Parish shall be transferred to the present Saint Bernard Parish where they will be faithfully preserved in accord with canon 535, §§1-5; and according to the norm of canon 121, all assets, whether movable or immovable, and all liabilities of Sacred Heart Parish, upon this union, will become the assets and liabilities of the present Saint Bernard Parish. Furthermore, possession of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to the former Sacred Heart Parish shall be transferred to the present Saint Bernard Parish and shall be administered in accordance with canons 1189 and 1292.

The unification of Sacred Heart Parish and Saint Bernard Parish will suppress and terminate the juridic personality of Sacred Heart Parish, which it now possesses by law. Therefore, Sacred Heart Parish shall be no longer the subject in canon law of obligations and rights corresponding to its nature as a juridic person. In addition, said Sacred Heart Parish shall be capable no longer of acquiring, retaining, administering, and alienating temporal goods according to the norm of law.

I direct that this Decree be given to the pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Marlborough, New Hampshire, and to the current pastor of Saint Bernard Parish in Manchester, New Hampshire, and that this information be communicated at all Masses of obligation on the weekend of Saturday, June 24, 2006 and Sunday, June 25, 2006.

Given at Manchester this 12th day of June, 2006

Bishop of Manchester

Chancellor