



**Diocese of Worcester**  
**Office of the Bishop**  
49 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

# DECREE

## **In Nomine Domini. Amen.**

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish is a territorial parish serving the pastoral needs of Catholic community in the western area in the city of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Its parish church is located on Vernon Street, Fitchburg.

The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Committee has recommended that in order to serve the spiritual and sacramental needs of the Catholic population in the city of Fitchburg better and more effectively, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish be merged with Saint Joseph Parish, Fitchburg. Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish does not have a resident pastor and shares a pastor with another parish.

In view of this recommendation, and after hearing the parties mandated by law, most especially the Presbyteral Council, in accord with canon 515, §2, of the *Code of Canon Law*, I, the Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester, holding before me my pastoral responsibilities to this particular church, hereby declare and decree the following:

- Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, is hereby merged with Saint Joseph Parish, Fitchburg, in accord with canon 121;
- Saint Joseph Parish, now a territorial parish, will assume the goods, a portion of the assets, including property and patrimonial rights, as well as the burdens and liabilities of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, respecting the intentions of the founders and donors, concerning the allocation of goods and the fulfillment of obligations, in accord with canon 121. The Most Reverend Bishop retains the right, afforded him in canon 122, to allocate some assets, which would be divided among the newly-reconfigured parishes in the city of Fitchburg, namely Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint Bernard and Saint Francis of Assisi, based on equity and justice given that some members of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish have indicated they will join these parishes;
- Saint Joseph Parish is to accommodate, to the extent possible, the spiritual traditions of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish;

- The sacramental records of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish are hereby placed under the guardianship of Saint Bernard Parish, Fitchburg;

The effective date of this decree is July 1, 2010, at 12:01 a.m.

I order that this decree be published.

Given at Worcester, Massachusetts, in the halls of the Chancery, this the twenty-third day of June, in the year of our Lord, two thousand ten.

  
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Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, D.D., S.T.D.

  
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Reverend Monsignor Thomas J. Sullivan  
Chancellor