



Joseph Charles Bambera

DEI ET APOSTOLICAE SEDIS GRATIA
EPISCOPUS SCRANTONENSIS



DECREE

In the name of God. Amen.

WHEREAS, utilizing the Diocese of Scranton's *Vision 2030: Creating Parish Communities Rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ* process, a pastoral planning process addressing the long-range needs and challenges of the Diocese of Scranton that aims to look proactively at the realities of our local church in the present moment while striving to meet the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade, with the goal of creating vibrant parish communities rooted in the life of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, Saint Barbara Parish is a territorial parish with Saint Anthony of Padua Church as its principal and sole church, located at 224 Memorial Street in Exeter, and;

WHEREAS, Corpus Christi Parish is a territorial parish with Immaculate Conception Church, located at 605 Luzerne Avenue in West Pittston, as its principal church, Holy Redeemer Church, located at 2435 State Route 92 in Falls, as its subsidiary church, and;

WHEREAS, Saint Barbara Parish has experienced a significant reduction of the Christian Faithful participating in the liturgical and sacramental life of the parish due to an aging population and relocation of residents of the territory, and;

WHEREAS, the diminishing number of faithful whose donations principally sustain the parish communities, has resulted in the continued inability to sustain ordinary maintenance and operations, and;

WHEREAS, the Reverend Monsignor John J. Sempa, Pastor of the linked Saint Barbara Parish and Corpus Christi Parish, with the collaboration of the Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils and in consultation with the effected parishioners, and with the recommendation of the clergy of the Pittston Deanery, has petitioned the undersigned that there be a suppression of Saint Barbara Parish and that Saint Anthony of Padua Church become a subsidiary church of Corpus Christi Parish, and;

WHEREAS, on May 28, 2024, following a presentation to the Presbyteral Council by Monsignor Sempa to provide the information necessary to make an informed consultation, in accord with the norm of canon 515 §2 of the *Code of Canon Law*, I consulted with the Diocesan Presbyteral Council on the question of the suppression of Saint Barbara Parish, in which Saint Anthony of Padua Church and Holy Redeemer Church

will be subsidiary churches and Immaculate Conception the principal church of the newly-consolidated parish, which will retain the name "Corpus Christi Parish."

WHEREAS, in consideration of the question of the suppression of Saint Barbara Parish, in accord with canon 51 I find the following motivating just causes:

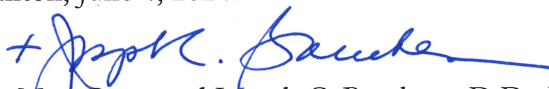
- The demographic changes of the parish communities, which have resulted in a sustained decrease in Mass attendance and sacramental participation
- The inability to sustain operational financial obligations
- The availability of fewer priests within the Diocese of Scranton to attend to the current number of parishes
- The concurrence of the regional Episcopal Vicar, the Vicar Forane, the Presbyteral Council in favor of the suppression of Saint Barbara Parish

THEREFORE, I, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, having in mind my responsibility to best address the spiritual needs of the Christian Faithful of Saint Barbara Parish and Corpus Christi Parish specifically and the needs of the Diocese of Scranton generally, and after invoking the Holy Spirit and satisfying myself that the good of souls will suffer no detriment, I hereby decree the following:


- The territorial parish of Saint Barbara Parish, Exeter, is hereby suppressed and amalgamated with Corpus Christi Parish, and Saint Anthony of Padua Church is designated as a subsidiary church of Corpus Christi Parish.
- This decree is to be published to the Pastor and the parishioners of Saint Barbara Parish and Corpus Christi Parish through publication in the parish bulletins on the weekend of June 8-9th and on the website of the Diocese of Scranton.
- The effective date of this decree is the second day of the public announcement, June 9, 2024. These changes will be implemented on July 1, 2024.

I am confident that the good of souls would not be harmed by this decree.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Scranton, June 4, 2024.



Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.
Bishop of Scranton



Linda E. Price, J.C.L.
Chancellor