



JEFFREY J. WALSH

Bishop of Gaylord

By the Grace of God and the Apostolic See

DECREE

Extinctive union of Saint James Parish in Whittemore, Michigan and the consolidation of its territory with Saint Pius X Parish in Hale, Michigan

On February 2nd, 1949, The Most Reverend William F. Murphy of the Diocese of Saginaw canonically erected St. James Parish. For the last 30 (plus) years, St. James has either been without a resident pastor, or has shared a pastor with Saint Pius X Parish, Hale, which has been during that time the main place of evangelization and catechesis. As time has gone on, a clearer picture of the reality of the resources within St. James Parish, as well as the pastoral needs of the Diocese, has emerged. After a series of consultative meetings at the parish and diocesan levels, the decision to merge St. James instead of investing the huge amount of money to replace the roof and other necessary structural repairs to the church and rectory has become evident.

This decision is based upon a number of grave circumstances. These include the decreasing number of priests available to provide pastoral care, the assistance of the sacraments, or the celebration of divine worship; an inability to continue to provide for the catechetical needs of the children, youth, and adults of the parish; financial unsustainability; and the demographic shift of Catholics away from the parish. At the same time, we recognize that Saint James Parish is geographically close to other parishes, and that the faithful will be able to approach the sacraments and participate in the full life of the Church without any undue burden. Indeed, this action is motivated principally by concern for souls (*Christus Dominus*, no. 32) and is required for the good of the faithful (*Apostolorum Successores*, no. 214).

At the request of Fr. Artur F. Duchnowicz, Pastor of St. James Parish, and having likewise consulted the Presbyteral Council on June 3, 2025, and listened to the Diocesan Pastoral and Finance Councils and the College of Consultors, in observance of canons 120, §1; 121; and 515, §§2-3 of the Code of Canon Law, and with no harm coming to the good of souls and indeed for the spiritual benefit of the faithful, and all the requirements of canons 50, 51, 127, 166, and 515, having been fulfilled, I, the undersigned, in virtue of my authority as Bishop of Gaylord, do hereby decree:

1. That the territories of Saint James Parish in Whittemore, Michigan, and Saint Pius X Parish in Hale, Michigan shall form one territorial parish, with the resulting extinctive union of the present Saint James Parish. This shall take effect at midnight at the end of

Sunday, September 28, 2025. The consolidated parish shall include the membership of the present Saint Pius X Parish and the former Saint James Parish, and the current Saint Pius X Parish Church edifice shall be the place of worship for the unified parish community. The new boundaries of Saint Pius X Parish shall include the current boundaries of Saint James Parish, in addition to the current boundaries of Saint Pius X Parish.

2. That the consolidated parish shall retain the name of Saint Pius X Parish.
3. That the Reverend Artur F. Duchnowicz shall be Pastor of the consolidated Catholic community to foster the pastoral care of the new Catholic community, bearing in mind the provision of canon 519.

Before Sunday, September 28, 2025, the parish registers containing the records of baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, marriage, and deaths, along with all parish records and historical documents, are to be forwarded St. Pius X Parish, Hale where they will be faithfully preserved and maintained in accord with canon 535, §§1-5. According to the norm of canon 121, all assets and liabilities, whether movable or immovable, of Saint James Parish will become the assets and liabilities of the consolidated Catholic community. Furthermore, ownership of all ecclesiastical goods and all objects of artistic or historical value belonging to Saint James Parish will be transferred to the new Catholic community and will be administered in accordance with the prescriptions of ecclesiastical law.

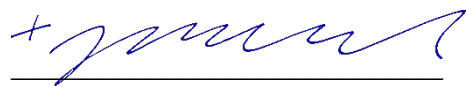
The effect of the extinctive union of Saint James Parish with Saint Pius X Parish is the termination of the juridic personality of the former Saint James Parish, which it now possesses by law. Thus, it will no longer be a subject of obligations and rights in canon law corresponding to its nature as a juridic person, nor will it be capable of acquiring, retaining, administering, or alienating temporal goods according to the norm of law.

I direct that this decree be given to the pastoral leadership of Saint James Parish and Saint Pius X Parish, and that its contents, especially the dispositive part of this decree, be communicated in an appropriate manner to parishioners on the weekend of the Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, that is, Saturday, September 20, 2025 and Sunday, September 21, 2025. I further direct that this decree be published on the website of the Diocese of Gaylord (www.dioceseofgaylord.org) which will be presumed to be the official notification of this action.

This decree may be challenged by anyone who feels aggrieved by it within the peremptory time limit of ten useful days from the legitimate notification of the decree, that is, on 19 September 2025, by seeking its revocation or emendation directly from me (can. 1734 §2).

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Curia of the Diocese of Gaylord on this Friday of the Twenty Fourth Week in Ordinary Time, the 19th day of September, in the year of our Lord, 2025



Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh
Bishop of Gaylord



Reverend James Hayden
Vicar General