



DECREE

In the name of the Lord. Amen.

I, Jeffrey Joseph Walsh, by the grace of God and the favor of the Apostolic See, Bishop of Gaylord, exercising my pastoral office in accord with can. 381 §1 and in virtue of can. 515 §2 and can. 1212, and having observed the requirements of cann. 50, 51, 120–123, 127, and 166, hereby issue the following decree.

I. Parishes Concerned

This decree concerns the parishes of:

- Jesus the Good Shepherd located in Atlanta and
- St. Augustine located in Hillman,

both of which are public juridic persons in the Church (cf. can. 515 §3).

II. Nature of the Canonical Act

After careful consideration, I hereby decree the extinctive union of these parishes (cf. can. 121), such that:

- Jesus the Good Shepherd is united to St. Augustine
- Jesus the Good Shepherd is extinguished;
- St. Augustine remains as the sole juridic person.

III. Determination of the Grave Cause (ad rem)

In accord with can. 1222 §1, if a church cannot be in any way used for divine worship, it may be used for a secular but not sordid purpose.

Having weighed the concrete circumstances of these Jesus the Good Shepherd, I determine that it is no longer suited for divine worship based on the extensive presence of black mould which renders it unsafe for any person to spend time in it without risk to personal health and well-being.

IV. Observance of Procedural Requirements

Before issuing this decree, I have:

1. Gathered the Necessary Information and Proofs (cf. can. 50), including a safety inspection report.
2. Heard Those Concerned, insofar as possible, including members of the faithful and others whose rights could be affected.
3. Consulted the Presbyteral Council even though, for the purposes of can. 1222 § 1 this is not required for Validity:
 - The Council was lawfully convoked (cf. can. 166),
 - Provided with all relevant information in advance,
 - And consulted regarding this specific proposed modification (cf. can. 127).
4. Their counsel was carefully considered.

V. Juridic Effects

As a result of this extinctive union:

- The juridic person Jesus the Good Shepherd is extinguished,
- St. Augustine succeeds to all juridic relations (cf. can. 121).

VI. Membership and Territory

St. Augustine comprises:

- In addition to its current faithful, all the Christian faithful residing within the territories previously belonging to Jesus the Good Shepherd.

The territorial boundaries are therefore altered to include all of the territory that was formerly that of Jesus the Good Shepherd.

VII. Closure of the Parish Church

In addition to the extinctive union of the parish, the parish church of Jesus the Good Shepherd is hereby closed. That is, it will no longer be used for the purposes of divine worship, and, by this act, is relegated to a secular but not sordid use according to can.1222 §1.

VIII. Temporal Goods and Obligations

In accord with cann. 121–123:

- Ownership of all temporal goods, rights, and obligations of the former parish, Jesus the Good Shepherd passes to St. Augustine.
- This disposition respects:
 - the principle that goods follow the people,
 - and the intentions of founders and donors, which remain binding.

IX. Effective Date

This decree takes effect on:
July 1, 2026

X. Notification and Right of Recourse

This decree is to be lawfully communicated to all concerned.

In accord with cann. 1734–1739, hierarchical recourse may be made within the peremptory time limits established by law, beginning from the date of lawful notification.

XI. Publication and Archival Record

This decree shall be published through the website of the diocese and preserved in the diocesan archives.

Given at the Chancery of Gaylord, on this 1st day of June, 2026.



Christina M. Ihlenfeldt
Christina Ihlenfeldt
Chancellor



Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh
Bishop of Gaylord