



## 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:

- St. Mary located in Burt Lake and
- St. Clement located in Pellston,

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:

- St. Mary is united to St. Clement;
- St. Mary is extinguished;
- St. Clement remains as the sole juridic person.

### **III. Determination of the Grave Cause (ad rem)**

In accord with can. 1222 §2, a church cannot be given over to a secular but not sordid use except for a grave cause.

Having weighed the concrete circumstances of these particular parishes, I determine that a grave cause exists, based on the following converging and interrelated factors:

1. For all intents and purposes, St. Mary is already functionally closed:
  - Over the past several years, there have been no scheduled liturgical celebrations and no requests for weddings, funerals, baptisms.
2. Objective Condition of the Communities Themselves (ad rem)

St. Mary is a parish in name only at this time:

- While it has a defined territory, there is nobody within that territory who considers themselves to be parishioners of St. Mary.
- None of those who are territorially present in St. Mary have asked for any form of worship to take place.

Taken together, these factors constitute a true and proportionate just cause, directly related to the parishes in question, and ordered to the *salus animarum*, which is the supreme law of the Church (cf. can. 1752).

#### **IV. Observance of Procedural Requirements**

Before issuing this decree, I have:

1. Gathered the Necessary Information and Proofs (cf. can. 50), including pastoral, sacramental, financial, and demographic data.
2. Heard Those Concerned, insofar as possible, including members of the faithful and others whose rights could be affected.
3. Consulted the Presbyteral Council 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 St. Mary is extinguished,
- St. Clement succeeds to all juridic relations (cf. can. 121).

## **VI. Membership and Territory**

St. Clement comprises:

- In addition to its current faithful, all the Christian faithful residing within the territories previously belonging to St. Mary.

The territorial boundaries are therefore altered to include all of the territory that was formerly that of St. Mary.

## **VII. Closure of the Parish Church**

In addition to the extinctive union of the parish, the parish church of St. Mary 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 §2.

## **VIII. Temporal Goods and Obligations**

In accord with cann. 121–123:

- Ownership of all temporal goods, rights, and obligations of the former parish, St. Mary passes to St. Clement.
- 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.

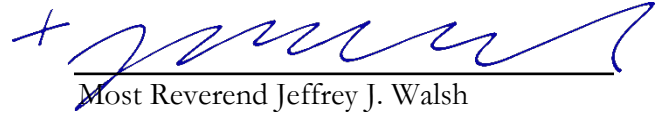
## **XI. Publication and Archival Record**

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