



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 having observed the requirements of cann. 50, 51, 120–123, 127, and 166, hereby issue the following decree.

I. Policy for Limited-Use Churches within the Diocese of Gaylord

This decree establishes that there are three types of limited-use churches:

- Simple limited-use church
- Seasonal limited-use church
- Extraordinary Form limited-use church

II. Nature of the Canonical Act

I hereby decree that the following are the simple limited-use churches:

- Holy Redeemer, Vanderbilt
- St. John Nepomucene, Praga
- St. Francis Solanus Chapel, Petoskey
- St. Monica, Afton
- St. Dominic, Metz
- St. Bernard, Alpena
- St. Mary, Alpena
- St. John Church/School, Alpena
- St. Gabriel, Black River
- St. Raphael, Mikado
- St. Helen, St. Helen
- St. Theresa, Manton
- St. Edward, Harrietta
- Guardian Angels, Manistee
- St. Raphael, Copemish

- St. Rita/St. Joseph, Maple City
- St. Gertrude, Northport
- St. Wenceslaus, Gill's Pier

The following is the seasonal limited-use church:

- St. Ignatius, Good Heart

The following is the Extraordinary Form limited-use church:

- St. Thomas Aquinas, Elmira

III. Commonalities of all Limited-Use Churches:

None of the limited-use churches in the Diocese of Gaylord are public juridic persons. Each of them depends upon the parish in whose territory they reside.

It belongs to the Bishop of Gaylord alone to determine what is a limited-use church, as well as what type of limited-use it is designated for. It also belongs to the Bishop of Gaylord alone to make a change of status to a different type of limited-use church.

All limited-use churches sacramental records will be conserved and administered by the parish in whose territory the limited-use church is found.

All three types of limited-use church will follow the policy for limited-use churches within the Diocese of Gaylord that applies to them.

IV. Specific Policies for Simple Limited-Use Churches:

It is forbidden for a simple limited-use church to have Mass on a Sunday, a holy day of obligation or the vigil thereof.

Every simple limited-use church will have Mass on its patronal feast, unless in a given year that falls on a Sunday, a holy day of obligation or the vigil thereof. On those occasions, in consultation with the faithful, a day and time close to it will be chosen, and the Mass of the patron will be celebrated.

The Blessed Sacrament is not permitted to be reserved in any simple limited-use church.

Those faithful who were considered members of the simple limited-use church prior to its designation, or who have strong family connections, such as children, grandchildren, etc. of those who were members may request that weddings, baptisms, and funerals be celebrated in the simple limited-use church. It is understood that these will not take place on Sundays, holy days of obligation, or vigils

thereof and also that the timing must be worked out with the pastor in whose territory the simple limited-use church resides, even if the one making the request is able to supply the priest or deacon.

When a sacrament is celebrated in the simple limited-use church, the record is to be kept in the parish in whose territory the simple limited-use church is, and to be recorded as taking place in the parish, but with a notation that it occurred in the simple limited-use church.

Those faithful who were members of the simple limited-use church prior to its designation may request of the pastor in whose territory the limited-use church resides access to the church for the purposes of non-sacramental forms of divine worship: public devotions to the patron, recitation of the rosary, prayer for vocations, etc. Such access is always at the discretion of said pastor; however, he is to be generous in allowing reasonable requests to be accommodated.

Groups which were accustomed to meet in the simple limited-use church prior to its designation, may, with the permission of the pastor in whose territory the simple limited-use church resides, continue to make use of the church or hall for such meetings.

The parish which receives the simple limited-use church is to follow the guidelines and standard operating procedures of the finance department of the Diocese of Gaylord with regards to the accounting and administration of the goods of the simple limited-use church.

V. Specific Policies for Seasonal Limited-Use Churches:

Those churches which are designated as seasonal limited-use churches may, at the discretion of the pastor in whose territory they reside have Mass on Sundays, holy days of obligation and vigils thereof, from Memorial Day weekend until Labor Day weekend.

At the discretion of the pastor, such churches may reserve the Blessed Sacrament during the period for which Sunday and holy day Masses are permitted, always provided that at least two such Masses take place in a calendar month.

VI. Specific Policies for Extraordinary Form Limited-Use Churches:

Those churches which are designated as extraordinary form limited-use churches may celebrate Mass on Sundays, holy days of obligation and vigils thereof but only in the extraordinary form.

As long as such churches retain this designation and have at least two such Masses per month, they may be permitted to reserve the blessed sacrament provided that the pastor of the parish in whose territory said church resides as well as the priest responsible for the celebration of the extraordinary form agree. Such permission may be revoked at any time.

A church which is designated as an extraordinary form limited-use church, because it enjoys the possibility of year-round Sunday use, will be assessed CSA by the diocese.

VII. Effective Date

This decree takes effect on:
July 1, 2026

VIII. 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.

IX. 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