



## Catholic Diocese of Columbus

### DECREE OF SUPPRESSION

of the Parish of St. Mary Church, Bremen, Ohio  
and the Parish of St. Joseph Church, Sugar Grove, Ohio  
and Changing the Parish of St. Bernadette, Lancaster, Ohio

Office of the Bishop  
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Whereas, demographic changes in the general population and among the Catholic faithful of the neighborhood, including but not limited to decline in registered parishioners, decline in mass attendance, decline in offertory revenue, and the shortage of priests, have drastically affected the viability of the parishes in that region; and

Whereas, a plan has been carefully developed by the clergy and faithful of St. Bernadette Church, St. Mary Church, and St. Joseph Church recommending the suppression of St. Mary Parish and St. Joseph Parish and the aggregation of the suppressed parishes with the parish of St. Bernadette; and


Whereas, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Columbus at a meeting held on September 28, 2023, reviewed the plan in detail and unanimously approved the proposal to suppress St. Mary Parish and St. Joseph Parish and to make changes to St. Bernadette Parish to join the territory, parishioners, assets and liabilities of St. Mary Parish and St. Joseph Parish to that of St. Bernadette Parish; and

Whereas, having heard the Presbyteral Council in accordance with Canon 515.2;

Therefore, I, Earl K. Fernandes, Bishop of Columbus, hereby decree the following

1. The Parish of St. Mary, Bremen and the Parish of St. Joseph, Sugar Grove, Ohio, are suppressed effective April 30, 2024;
2. Simultaneously with the suppression of St. Mary Parish and St. Joseph Parish, the territory, parishioners, property, assets and liabilities of these parishes will be joined to those of St. Bernadette Parish by aggregation into a single juridic person, care of which is entrusted to the pastor of St. Bernadette Parish. The territorial jurisdiction of this parish will encompass the territory which by long-standing custom pertained to St. Mary, St. Joseph, and St. Bernadette parishes.
3. The care of St. Mary Church and St. Joseph Church and the other properties of the former St. Mary Parish and St. Joseph Parish, whether sacred or profane, will become the responsibility of St. Bernadette Parish, until further decisions are made and approved through the appropriate canonical processes regarding the disposition of these buildings and properties.
4. This decree shall be promulgated by publication in the Catholic Times and disseminated in the affected parishes via the parish bulletin and other means of communication as deemed appropriate by Pastor of the affected communities.

Given at the Chancery Office, 198 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio this 28<sup>th</sup> of September, 2023

  
Most Reverend Earl K. Fernandes  
Bishop of Columbus

  
Notary

