



## Catholic Diocese of Columbus

### DECREE OF SUPPRESSION of the Parish of St. Joseph, Somerset, Ohio and Changing the Parish of Holy Trinity, Somerset, 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. Joseph and Holy Trinity recommending the suppression of St. Joseph Parish and the aggregation of the suppressed parish with the parish of Holy Trinity, Somerset; and

Whereas, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Columbus at a meeting held on March 21, 2024, reviewed the plan in detail and unanimously approved the proposal to suppress St. Joseph Parish and to make changes to Holy Trinity Parish to join the territory, parishioners, assets and liabilities of St. Joseph Parish to that of Holy Trinity 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. Joseph, Somerset, Ohio, is suppressed effective June 30, 2024;
2. Simultaneously with the suppression of St. Joseph Parish, the territory, parishioners, property, assets and liabilities of these parishes will be joined to those of Holy Trinity Parish by aggregation into a single juridic person, care of which is entrusted to the pastor of Holy Trinity Parish. Also simultaneously, the new name of Holy Trinity Parish shall henceforth be named, "Holy Trinity – St. Joseph Parish."
3. The territorial boundaries of the new parish will combine the previous boundaries of both Holy Trinity and St. Joseph Parish, Somerset.
4. The care of St. Joseph Church and the other properties of the former St. Joseph Parish, whether sacred or profane, will become the responsibility of Holy Trinity Parish, until further decisions are made and approved through the appropriate canonical processes regarding the disposition of these buildings and properties.
5. This decree shall be promulgated by publication on the Diocesan Website, 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 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2024.



Notary

*Earl K. Fernandes*

Most Reverend Earl K. Fernandes  
Bishop of Columbus