



## Joseph Charles Bambera

DEI ET APOSTOLICAE SEDIS GRATIA  
EPISCOPUS SCRANTONENSIS



### DECREE

The Diocese of Scranton's *Vision 2030: Creating Parish Communities Rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ*, a pastoral planning process addressing the long-range needs and challenges of the Diocese of Scranton, looks proactively at the realities of our local church in the present moment while striving to meet the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade, with the goal of creating vibrant parish communities rooted in the life of Jesus Christ.

The Reverend Kevin M. Miller is the Pastor of Annunciation Parish, Hazleton, and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton. The territorial Parish of Holy Name of Jesus has as its sole worship site Transfiguration Church, 213 West Green Street in West Hazleton. The territorial Parish of Annunciation has as its sole worship site Saint Gabriel Church, 122 South Wyoming Street in Hazleton.

Due to changing demographics, both parishes have experienced significant financial strain, with decreased offertory insufficient to sustain the ordinary maintenance, operations, and administration. Additionally, over the coming decade and beyond, the Diocese of Scranton faces a decreasing number of priests. Now, in an effort to strengthen the preaching of the Gospel and to ensure the vitality of the parish life in the Hazleton and West Hazleton regions of the Diocese of Scranton, with concern for the best stewardship of resources and the right of the people of God to receive assistance from the Church, especially the Word of God, spiritual sustenance, the sacraments and the continuation of ministries, it is necessary to make new provisions for the spiritual care of the parishioners of these parishes.

To that end, with Father Miller having obtained the consent of both the Annunciation and Holy Name of Jesus Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils and having asked parishioners to make known their needs and desires, he has petitioned the undersigned, in accord with canon 121 of the *1983 Code of Canon Law*, for a consolidation of both Parishes which will result in a newly-formed Parish.

After consultation, there has been a concurrence of the regional Episcopal Vicar, the Vicar Forane, and the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Scranton in support of this merger.

Therefore, in accord with canons 121, 515 §2 §3, and 518 of the *1983 Code of Canon Law*, I, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, having in mind my responsibility to best address the spiritual needs of the Christian Faithful of Holy Name of Jesus Parish

and Annunciation Parish specifically and the needs of the Diocese of Scranton generally, and after invoking the Holy Spirit and satisfying myself that the good of souls will suffer no detriment, hereby:

1. Merge Annunciation Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish to form one territorial parish effecting an extinctive union of the two parishes. The merger will be implemented on July 1, 2025.
2. The boundaries of the new parish will encompass the entire territory of the former Annunciation Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, and the parishioners previously belonging to Annunciation Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish by virtue of domicile will now belong to the new parish.
3. The existing church edifice of each of the former parishes will remain the sites of worship for the new parish community, until such time that the Pastor, with the advice of his Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, and with my consent, determines otherwise. The principal worship site will be Saint Gabriel Church and the secondary worship site will be Transfiguration Church.
4. Establish that the name of the new territorial parish be known from midnight at the end of June 30, 2025 as "Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish." The name of the current Transfiguration Church and Saint Gabriel Church edifices shall remain unchanged.

This decision is motivated by a number of components, among them the concern for souls and spiritual welfare of the parish communities, the spread of the Gospel, the fostering of unity of the People of God in the Hazleton Deanery, the enhancement of collaborative ministry, the formation of one unified community and the best use of available priest and lay personnel.

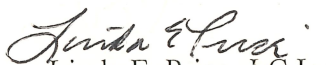
I direct that this Decree be given to the Pastor of Annunciation Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, and that this information be communicated in the bulletins of Annunciation Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish on the weekend of Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> and Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, and the Decree published on the diocesan website on May 31, 2025. The effective date of this decree is the second date of the announcement, June 1, 2025.

I am confident that the good of souls would not be harmed by this decree.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Scranton, on May 15, 2025.



Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.  
Bishop of Scranton



Linda E. Price, J.C.L.  
Chancellor