



# Joseph Charles Bambera

DEI ET APOSTOLICAE SEDIS GRATIA  
EPISCOPUS SCRANTONENSIS



## DECREE

In the name of God. Amen.

**WHEREAS**, the Diocese of Scranton's *Vision 2030: Creating Parish Communities Rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ*, is 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, and;

**WHEREAS**, according to *CIC* c. 381 §1, the jurisdiction exercised by the diocesan bishop is ordinary, proper, and immediate and is provided to him in the same diocese entrusted to him for the exercise of his pastoral function, and;

**WHEREAS**, according to *CIC* c. 515 §1, a parish is a defined community of the Christian Faithful stably constituted within the particular church, and, according to *CIC* c. 515 §3, possesses juridic personality *ipso iure* and whose pastoral care is entrusted to its proper pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop, and;

**WHEREAS**, through the aforementioned exercise of jurisdiction in the particular church entrusted to his care, according to *CIC* c. 515 §2, the diocesan bishop alone is competent to erect, suppress, or notably alter parishes always having heard the presbyteral council prior to the aforementioned action, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Diocese of Scranton's *Vision 2030* pastoral planning process evaluates the viability of parishes based on the following priority drivers:

- Equitable distribution of clergy based on population of Catholic members of the Christian Faithful;
- Financial viability of parishes;
- Participation in sacramental life of parishes by the Christian Faithful;
- Infrastructure needs of parish facilities;
- Growth or decline of overall population in a particular area, and;

**WHEREAS**, Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish, a personal parish for Catholics of Italian heritage, has Saint Anthony of Padua Church, 208 Smith Street in Dunmore, as its principal church and Saint Rocco Church, 122 Kurtz Street in Dunmore, as its secondary church, and;

**WHEREAS**, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, a territorial parish that encompasses the entire Borough of Dunmore, has as its sole church Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Church, 322 Chestnut Street in Dunmore, and;

**WHEREAS**, the two parishes were linked in July 2023, and the Reverend David P. Cappelloni is serving as the pastor of both Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, and;

**WHEREAS**, the two parishes have experienced a serious reduction of the Christian Faithful participating in the liturgical and sacramental life of both parishes due to decreased population, aging population and relocation of residents of the territory:

- From 2018 to 2025 the total number of registered parishioners has decreased by 37 percent (from 5,980 to 3,780);
- From 2018 to 2025 the Mass attendance has decreased by 34 percent (from 1,646 to 1,090);
- From 2018 to 2025 the number of baptisms has decreased by 52 percent (from 54 to 26);
- From 2018-2025 the number of weddings has decreased by 58 percent (from 21 to 9);
- From 2018-2025 the number enrolled in Religious Education has decreased 38 percent (118 fewer enrollees, and);

**WHEREAS**, in fulfillment of *CIC* c. 50, in March 2025 Father Cappelloni presented members of the finance and pastoral councils of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish with the relevant priority drivers for the proposed merger of both parishes by means of an extinctive suppression of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish, soliciting opinions and feedback from the same council members, and;

**WHEREAS**, on February 25, 2026 an information session on this proposed merger was held at a public meeting for all the parishioners of the linked parishes, during which feedback and opinions from affected parishioners was heard, and;

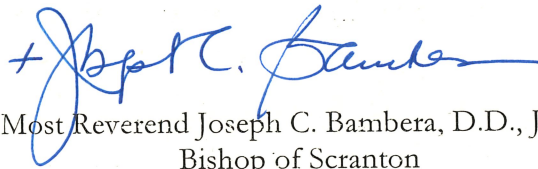
**WHEREAS**, on April 14, 2026 the undersigned diocesan bishop heard the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Scranton, having deliberated the facts of the aforementioned priority drivers and the proposed canonical action to merge the two parishes by means of a suppression of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish;

**THEREFORE**, I, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, having the responsibility to address the spiritual needs of the Christian Faithful of the Diocese of Scranton generally and of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish specifically and having determined that there will be no detriment to the good of souls, hereby decree the following:

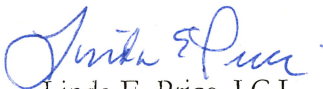
- There will be a merger of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish by means of an extinctive suppression of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish, with the changes taking effect on July 1, 2026. Saint Anthony of Padua Church will be the principal church, and Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Church and Saint Rocco Church will be secondary churches.
- On this date the name of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish will be changed to Saint John Paul II Parish.
- This is to be published to the Pastor and Parishioners of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish through publication in their joint parish bulletin on the weekend of April 25-26, 2026, and the decree is to be published on the diocesan website on April 25, 2026.

**FURTHERMORE**, should parishioners of Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish decide to file recourse against this decree they are required *ad validitatem*, in light of the prescripts of *CIC* cc. 1732-1739, to submit a petition to the undersigned within ten useful days of the actual or presumed notification of this decree. Moreover, should recourse against this decree be lodged, suspensive effect happens *ipso iure*.

Given at the Chancery Building of the Diocese of Scranton on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of April in the Year of Our Lord, 2026.



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



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