



117/2025

***Decree***

***Extinctive union of Saint Malachi Parish into Saint Patrick Parish (Bridge Avenue, Cleveland)  
Diocese of Cleveland***

In the Name of the Lord. Amen.

Whereas the parish of Saint Patrick, located on Bridge Avenue, on the Near West Side of Cleveland, founded in the year of our Lord 1853, was established by the Bishop of Cleveland to minister to the Catholic faithful, primarily of Irish descent, west of the Cuyahoga River; and

Whereas the parish of Saint Malachi, founded in 1865, located in the area commonly called “the Old Angle,” also west of the Cuyahoga River, embraced its mission from its earliest days in responding to the spiritual and temporal needs of the Catholic faithful, particularly those of the newly arrived Irish immigrants; and

Whereas for over more than a century and a half the two parishes have witnessed the economic and demographic changes of their communities and have responded in a committed mission of spreading the hope and peace of the Gospel message through worship and acts of Christian charity and social justice; and

Whereas a thorough study of the condition of Saint Malachi Parish had been instituted in 2023 by the administrator of Saint Malachi Parish which included in-depth study of finances, the physical plant, ministries, outreach services, sacramental statistics, Mass attendance, and options for pastoral care; and

Whereas the study included the participation of the Saint Malachi pastoral council, finance council, lay members of an ad hoc committee, along with canonical and financial consultation, and that of diocesan officials; and

Whereas the result of the study, having been made public to the parishioners of both Saint Malachi Parish and Saint Patrick Parish, resulted in the recommendation of the people of Saint Malachi Parish to the Bishop of Cleveland that Saint Malachi Parish be merged into the Parish of Saint Patrick; and that the church of Saint Malachi be maintained for the celebration of the sacraments; and

Whereas I approved the agenda for the meeting of the Presbyteral Council including the discussion required by law regarding the modification of a parish (canon 515§2) and directed the agenda be sent to the members of the Presbyteral Council in anticipation of the proximate meeting; and

Whereas I convoked the Presbyteral Council on 22 November 2024 and presided over it according to the norm of law (canons 127 §1, 166 §1, and 500 §1), placing the proposed extinctive union of Saint Malachi Parish into Saint Patrick Parish before the council seeking the informed and free counsel of the members concerning the proposed extinctive union (canon 515§2), listening to arguments both for and against the proposed modification of each parish, receiving support for the proposal; and

Whereas “it is only for the diocesan bishop to erect, suppress, or alter parishes. He is neither to erect suppress, or alter notably parishes, unless he has heard the Presbyteral Council (canon 515§2)”; and

Whereas the parish of Saint Malachi has experienced a significant decline in Mass attendance and in the celebration of the sacraments and has limited resources; and

Whereas the population of the territory of Saint Malachi Parish has decreased such that there is no longer a need for two distinct parishes in relative close proximity to provide spiritual and temporal resources for residents and the homeless (*vagi*); and

Whereas the members of the Presbyteral Council convoked on 22 November 2024 were polled with the majority voting, with two abstentions, to approve the proposal of the extinctive union of the Parish of Saint Malachi into the Parish of Saint Patrick, Bridge Avenue, Cleveland.

Having heard from Reverend Michael Gurnick, pastor of Saint Patrick Parish and administrator of Saint Malachi Parish, in order to promote the good of souls as well as the good of the Diocese of Cleveland, I, the undersigned Bishop of Cleveland, find that the following just causes support the extinctive union of Saint Malachi Parish into that of Saint Patrick Parish:

- 1) to provide more effectively for the pastoral care of the Christian faithful in the territory of Saint Malachi and Saint Patrick Parish;
- 2) to strengthen the preaching of the Gospel and assure the vitality of parish life;
- 3) to provide for a more effective stewardship of parish resources, including personnel and financial;
- 4) to assure adequate catechetical formation and sacramental preparation;
- 5) to provide for the best use of clergy.

Having heard from Reverend Michael Gurnick, pastor of Saint Patrick Parish and administrator of Saint Malachi Parish, I hereby decree:

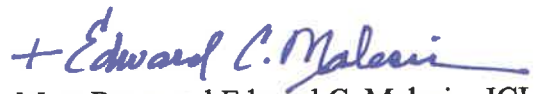
1. The parishes of Saint Malachi and Saint Patrick are united via an extinctive union, such that Saint Malachi Parish is extinguished and subsumed into Saint Patrick Parish.
2. The principal parochial church will be the church of Saint Patrick, located at 3602 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio.
3. The church building of Saint Malachi be maintained for the celebration of the sacraments.
4. The regular schedule of Masses and the celebration of the sacraments will be determined by the pastor of Saint Patrick Parish.

5. All sacramental registers of Saint Malachi Parish are to be conveyed to the office of Saint Patrick Parish where they are to be faithfully preserved according to the norms of canon 535, §1-5.
6. The temporal goods as well as any patrimonial rights and obligations of Saint Malachi Parish will be assumed by Saint Patrick Parish. The intentions of the founders and donors as well as any acquired rights are to be respected (canon 121).
7. The provisions of this decree will become effective on 27 April 2025, the Second Sunday of Easter, the Sunday of Divine Mercy.

I further order this decree to be made public to the faithful through its publication within the parish bulletin and the websites of Saint Malachi Parish and Saint Patrick Parish this day, 9 March 2025, the First Sunday of Lent. The publication on the parish websites will be the legitimate notification. A letter of notification of this decree is to be sent to the parishioners of Saint Malachi Parish and Saint Patrick Parish.

This decree may be challenged by anyone legitimately aggrieved by it within the preemphory time limit of ten days from the legitimate notification of the decree, that is, on 21 March 2025, by seeking its revocation or emendation directly from me (canon 1734 §2).

Given at the Office of the Bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland, on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-five.

  
Most Reverend Edward C. Malesic, JCL  
Bishop of Cleveland

  
Chancellor

