

DECREE

Having received the recommendation of the Episcopal Vicar for London and of the working group composed of representative members from St. Martin of Tours Parish in the city of London in the province of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as *St. Martin of Tours Parish*) and St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community in the city of London in the province of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as *St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community*), and having consulted with the Council of Priests of the Diocese of London on November 16, 2010, in accordance with canon 515, §2, I, Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B., Bishop of London, do hereby decree an extinctive union whereby St. Martin of Tours Parish and St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community will become St. Francis of Assisi – St. Martin of Tours Parish effective November 30, 2013.

The reasons for this action are:

1. In recent years, St. Martin of Tours Parish has experienced a notable decline in the number of parishioners as a consequence of shifting urban demographics and changing societal realities. The evidence of this is to be found in the fact that between 2008-2009, regular Mass attendance declined by 21%. One result of this decrease is that St. Martin of Tours Church in the city of London in the province of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as *St. Martin of Tours Church*) is a building that is seriously under-utilized.
2. While the suppression of Holy Rosary Parish in the city of London in the province of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as *Holy Rosary Parish*) in May 2005 and the absorption of its boundaries into St. Martin of Tours Parish should have resulted in a significant increase in the number of its families and households, the greater portion of the territory of Holy Rosary Parish was to the east of Holy Rosary Church in the city of London in the province of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as *Holy Rosary Church*) and in the opposite direction from St. Martin of Tours Parish. Consequently a large proportion of the parishioners of Holy Rosary Parish migrated to other parishes other than St. Martin of

Tours Parish.

3. With a diminishment in the number of its active parishioners, St. Martin of Tours Parish has experienced serious financial issues in recent years manifested in sizeable yearly operating deficits. What reserves were had both from the parish's own income and the proceeds from the sale of Holy Rosary Church have been expended to cover operational expenses and yearly deficits.
4. St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community, established in June 2007 to serve the pastoral needs of the Hispanic-speaking Catholics in the city of London and the surrounding region, is a growing community that continues to receive immigrants from all Hispanic-speaking countries.
5. For the past eight (8) years, St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community has rented space for its liturgies, educational endeavors and cultural activities from St. Martin of Tours Parish. It has now outgrown the space allotted to them.
6. St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community does not have the financial ability to take on the entirety of the expenses which would be incurred to operate St. Martin of Tours Church completely. Nor does it have the accumulated funds to purchase or build another church facility.
7. The merger of these two communities presents advantages for both: it allows the community of St. Martin of Tours Parish to remain in St. Martin of Tours Church and it offers St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community a larger use of the facility, which is advantageous to the growing Hispanic-speaking Catholic community in the city of London and the surrounding region. Through the joining of their respective financial resources there is advantage for both. Furthermore, it will also allow for a more effective and coordinated effort by the two pastoral staffs. This will not only be a better use of limited resources but also be of benefit to the overall pastoral efforts to build up the new faith community.

In conformity to the norms set out in canon 121, I also decree that the patrimonial goods and rights of St. Martin of Tours Parish and St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community, along with their liabilities, will from the date this extinctive union comes into effect obtain and belong to St. Francis of Assisi - St. Martin of Tours Parish, with every care to be taken that in the arrangements for the goods and discharge of obligations, the wishes of founders and benefactors and any acquired rights are fully safeguarded.

The territorial boundaries of St. Francis of Assisi – St. Martin of Tours Parish shall be those established for St. Martin of Tours Parish in a decree dated December 19, 2006. As well, St. Francis of Assisi – St. Martin of Tours Parish shall be the personal parish, in accordance with canon 518, for all Hispanic-speaking Catholics within the city of London and the surrounding region.

Furthermore, I decree that the sacramental records of St. Martin of Tours Parish and St. Francis of Assisi Hispanic Catholic Community are to be transferred to and maintained by St. Francis of Assisi – St. Martin of Tours Parish.

I direct that this decree be published in St. Martin of Tours Church and by a suitable means throughout the Diocese of London, with the understanding that any who wish to make recourse against it, in accordance with canon 1734, §1-2, must do so in writing within ten canonical days from the time this decree was lawfully notified.

Given at London in the province of Ontario this eleventh day of November in the year two thousand and thirteen.

Bishop of London

Chancellor