



## ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

Office of the Archbishop

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June 25, 2023

[REDACTED]  
Saint Louis, Missouri 63123

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

I am writing in response to your letter to me, dated June 7, 2023, in which you request that I revoke or emend my Decree by which I altered the juridic structure of your Parish effective August 1, 2023.

I wish to clarify that my Decree contained no decision regarding the future use of your Parish Church and facilities. Your new Pastor has received the responsibility to provide the sacraments and pastoral care to all members of the Parish. Together with lay Parish leadership, he must discern when Mass is celebrated in the church, and how best to use the facilities formerly belonging to your Parish. In receiving this, please realize that a consequence of the new Parish structure is that members of your former Parish should now be included among the lay Parish leadership.

I want you to know that my decision was made after careful study and long consultation. In this process, I considered the probable future number of priests and the need to distribute priests throughout the diocese in an equitable manner. But, even more so, I considered whether the human and material resources of each, individual parish would be adequate to sustain parish life throughout the next ten to fifteen years. In light of these factors, I concluded that my decision regarding your Parish was necessary.

St. Martin of Tours Parish is similar in size and demographics to other suburban Parishes which are being merged or subsumed. The size of St. Martin of Tours Parish and the age of its parishioners means that your Parish is expected to begin having difficulty sustaining parish life. I value the contributions of older Catholics who make up such a large portion of your active parish. In fact, I will be joining your number soon. This having been said, the generation which follows ours has many fewer active Catholics in it. Although Saint Martin of Tours Parish is a haven for Catholic seniors in the present, demographic trends tell us that this cannot be sustained for the long term.

I note that the Reverend Robert Burkemper, your new Pastor, has already announced that a Sunday Mass will take place each week at Saint Martin of Tours Church; in this way your fellow parishioners with impaired mobility will be able to attend Mass each week without difficulty. Father Burkemper deserves praise for already examining how best to use Saint Martin of Tours

Church and the rest of its campus for the care of the faithful and promotion of the Gospel. I encourage you to express to him your views concerning how the united Parish community can best serve the wider community in Lemay. Saint Martin of Tours Parish throughout its history has helped many people through good stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. Your support of your new Pastor may well be the best way to preserve Saint Martin of Tours Church for the benefit of future generations, and to continue in a new way the good works of those who have gone before us.

This having been said, I have decided not to revoke nor emend my decision regarding your Parish. This letter stands as my response to your request, in accordance with canon 1735 of the Code of Canon Law. I hope that you can accept my decision for the wellbeing of your Parish.

If you consider yourself aggrieved by my decision, you have the right to make recourse to the Dicastery for the Clergy, in accordance with canon 1737. If you choose to do so, you are asked to propose your recourse in writing to me at 20 Archbishop May Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63119. I will then forward your petition to the Dicastery for the Clergy. Your request for recourse must be postmarked no later than 15 business days from your receipt of the present letter.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Mitchell T. Rozanski*

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski  
Archbishop of Saint Louis



*Philip J. Bené*  
Very Reverend Philip J. Bené, J.C.D.  
Notary