



## **Catholic Diocese of Memphis**

5825 Shelby Oaks Drive  
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October 1, 2024

After a thorough evaluation, the Catholic Diocese of Memphis has made the difficult decision to canonically “merge” Blessed Sacrament Parish and St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus Parish, establishing one Parish, Little Flower. St. Theresa Church will be the Parish Church, while Blessed Sacrament Church will be a subsidiary church of the Parish. This decision was based on a more than two-year process of discernment with the Pastoral and Finance Councils of Blessed Sacrament and Little Flower, including a comprehensive study of the financial and pastoral viability of Blessed Sacrament.

The daily and weekend schedule of Masses, devotions, and activities will remain the same, and funerals, weddings, and other events can still take place at Blessed Sacrament, as they have always been, but the records will be with Little Flower Parish. What will change is that the geographical area that was once Blessed Sacrament Parish will now be Little Flower Parish. The finances, sacramental records, and responsibilities of both parishes will now be combined into one, that of the St. Theresa Parish.

As this canonical realignment takes place, parishioners and alumni can still worship as they always have at Blessed Sacrament. Most importantly, the goal is to grow as *one* parochial family and continue to prosper for years to come. To help move forward together, parishioners will have opportunities to process this decision and their future together in various ways (individual conversations, correspondence, joint worship, and fellowship), especially in a “Town Hall Meeting” that will take place soon.

As we look ahead, parishioners will continue to meet around the unifying Altar of the Lord in love and worship, and from Him receive the grace and impetus to continue to bring His Presence to the heart of Memphis for many years ahead. All Glory to God!

Note: Attached is the Decree from Bishop David P. Talley that gives the details of the decision.



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
DIOCESE OF MEMPHIS  
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## DECREE

### *Merger (Extinctive Union) of Blessed Sacrament Parish with Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus Parish*

In fulfilling my duties to the people of the Diocese of Memphis in Tennessee, I am conscious that the faithful interact with the Diocese and the Universal Church primarily through their parishes. Due to changing circumstances in the City of Memphis and the reduction of priests available to serve as pastors, it is necessary that I coordinate the care of souls in the diocese in such a way that I can effectively meet the needs of all parishioners with the human and material resources currently available.

Over many years, Blessed Sacrament Parish has experienced a dramatic reduction in registered parishioners. The Reverend Yoelvis A. González has served for several years now as the Pastor of both Blessed Sacrament Parish and Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus Parish. Father Gonzalez consulted with the parish Pastoral Council and Finance Council of Blessed Sacrament Parish about the possibility of merging Blessed Sacrament into Saint Teresa Parish. According to the letter submitted to me by Father González, the two councils have unanimously advised that Blessed Sacrament Parish be merged into Saint Teresa Parish. The proposal was presented to the diocesan Presbyteral Council on June 20, 2024; the counsel of all was sought, and no objection was made.

Therefore, I, the Most Reverend David P. Talley, in accordance with canon 515, §2, having heard the Presbyteral Council, hereby unite Blessed Sacrament Parish in Memphis with the parish of Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus, in such a way that Blessed Sacrament Parish ceases to exist as a juridic person. In accord with the practice articulated by the Congregation for the Clergy, the assets and liabilities of Blessed Sacrament Parish are to be forwarded to Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus Parish, and the sacramental records from Blessed Sacrament Parish are to be preserved in the parochial archive of Saint Teresa Parish. Blessed Sacrament Church will remain open for worship as a subsidiary church of Saint Teresa Parish.

Recourse against this decree may be made by petitioning me for the amendment or revocation of the decree within the time limit of ten useful days (c. 1734, §§1-2). Subsequent recourse should be directed to the Dicastery for the Clergy.

I entrust the faithful of Blessed Sacrament to the care of the Pastor of Teresa Parish and pray that the parish community at Saint Teresa will flourish and continue to proclaim the Gospel to all the people of the expanded territory.

This Decree takes effect on October 1, 2024, the Memorial of the St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus.

+ *David P. Talley*  
Most Reverend David P. Talley, M.S.W., J.C.D.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Memphis on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, 2024

*James M. Clark*  
Very Rev. James M. Clark, J.C.L.

