

# Summary of the Sherburne ACC Merger Decree

June 5, 2026

This decree, issued by the Bishop of the Diocese of Saint Cloud, formalizes the merger of the parishes of St. Marcus and Mary of the Visitation within the Sherburne Area Catholic Community (ACC) as part of a broader diocesan pastoral planning process. The main points are:

## 1. Background and Motivation

- The merger responds to declining clergy numbers, shifting demographics, overworked staff, and inefficient resource use.
- The All Things New Planning Process was initiated to address these challenges, with ACCs required to develop local plans.

## 2. Merger Details

- St. Marcus and Mary of the Visitation are merged into a single parish, with Fr. Michael Kellogg appointed as pastor.
- The Church of the Immaculate Conception is designated as the primary church for major celebrations.
- St. Marcus becomes a partner church, retaining regular weekend Masses as clergy are available.
- The Church of Our Lady of the Lake is to be considered for alternative uses, including possible sale, pending further consultation and reporting.

## 3. Consultation and Decision Process

- Two merger plans were considered, with input from parishioners and diocesan committees.
- The Committee for the Affirmation of Plans (CAP) and the Presbyteral Council both recommended the merger, favoring Plan #1.

## 4. Governance and Asset Allocation

- The merged parish inherits all assets, rights, and obligations of the former parishes, including responsibility for three cemeteries.
- Parishioners' registrations transfer automatically, with provisions for equitable asset distribution if they register elsewhere.
- Governance structures are streamlined, with a single finance council and trustees, ensuring representation from St. Marcus until 2030.

## 5. Implementation and Notification

- The decree outlines notification procedures and allows for appeals within ten working days.
- The merger and its provisions take effect July 1, 2027, unless otherwise specified.
- Mass schedules and parish events are to be coordinated to preserve traditions from both communities.

This decree aims to strengthen parish life, improve resource management, and foster unity among the Catholic communities in the Sherburne ACC. To view the decree in its entirety, visit [www.christourlightmn.org/parish-history](http://www.christourlightmn.org/parish-history) and scroll down to the section regarding the merger decree.