



## DECREE

### *Regarding Partnering of The Epiphany of the Lord and St. Hippolyte Parishes and Modifying the Status of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Cochranton*

In light of ongoing pastoral planning in the Diocese of Erie, as well as demographic and population changes, and in consultation with its pastor and others who may be impacted, I hereby decree the following:

1. In accord with particular law of the Diocese of Erie, St. Hippolyte Parish, Frenchtown, is to be partnered with The Epiphany of the Lord Parish, Meadville – with the Reverend Jeffrey Lucas currently serving as pastor of both parishes.
2. Also, in accord with particular law, in light of decreasing Mass attendance and limited availability of priests, Our Lady of Lourdes church, Cochranton, will become a secondary church without mission status – meaning that Our Lady of Lourdes church will no longer hold Masses on Sundays or holy days of obligation or their anticipated Masses. The Our Lady of Lourdes church is to remain open to the faithful at least occasionally for sacred worship (canon 1214) including regularly-scheduled weekday liturgical celebrations. As required by law, Mass is to be celebrated in the church every year on the solemnity of the church's title, in accord with current liturgical norms.
3. Circumstances including travel distance, availability of suitable office space, availability of staff and volunteers etc. may necessitate dispensation from certain aspects of particular law governing partnered parishes in the Diocese of Erie. Such dispensations will be granted as needed by the diocesan bishop in consultation with the pastor.

This decree is effective August 7, 2023. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Erie on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2023.

*+Lawrence T. Persico*

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL  
Bishop of Erie

*Christopher J. Singer*

The Reverend Christopher J. Singer, JCL  
Chancellor

