



Saint Mary's, Jackson February 20, 2015
Announcement of the closure of Saint Mary's Parish/Church

Since my first visit to Saint Mary's to meet with Father Phipps last April of 2014, there have been many opportunities to investigate and discuss the viability of the diocesan parishes and schools in West and South Jackson. Over the past ten months I have had the opportunity to learn a great deal more about Saint Mary's, its remarkable history and its current state with respect to its massive Gothic Church and the other structures that make up its ten acres, along with the number of active parishioners who live in the territorial boundaries of the parish, and those who travel from other parts of the city, or from nearby communities.

Motivated by Church law and pastoral ministry for the care of souls over, the past ten months I have inquired about the viability of Saint Mary's through parish meetings, a comprehensive engineering evaluation of the Church building, an evaluation of parish membership and finances, countless conversations with diocesan staff, and the convoking of the Priest Council to ascertain their recommendation. The final piece required by church law was the convoking of the Priest Council in January to thoroughly and openly discuss the current state of the parish with respect to her viability. As a result of this deliberative and patient process,

I am here to announce that Saint Mary's parish is to undergo extinctive union with Saint Therese's parish, Jackson and the Church closed in the very near future. Saint Therese's is the neighboring territorial parish. I believe this to be the best decision for the care of souls who can become active parishioners in neighboring or local parish communities, for the safeguarding of sacred objects from further deterioration in the church structure, and for the prevention of wasting resources, financial and otherwise. I do make this decision with a sad heart imagining what this parish community and neighborhood once were, and knowing the dedication of a small body of faithful parishioners who have fought the good fight for many years right up to this present moment.

Msgr. Elvin Sunds will now address some of the canonical requirements, and protocols, as well as important dates over the next few weeks regarding the final weekend mass.