



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1Cor1.23

**HIS GRACE
MOST REVEREND PETER ANDREW COMENSOLI**
By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

**DECREE MERGING ST AGNES PARISH, HIGHETT AND OUR LADY OF THE
ASSUMPTION PARISH, CHELTENHAM
AND, AT THE SAME TIME, ESTABLISHING**

CHRIST OUR LIGHT PARISH, HIGHETT-CHELTENHAM

THE FACTS

1. St Agnes Parish, Highett was established in 1951. Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Cheltenham was established in 1958. The parishes were partnered under a single Parish Priest in 2020.
2. Following the unsuccessful petition for the amalgamation of the six parishes in the pastoral area known as 'Bayside Catholic Mission', namely St James, Gardenvale, St Joan of Arc, Brighton, St Mary's, Hampton, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Hampton East, Sacred Heart, Sandringham and Nazareth, Ricketts Point, in May 2023 the Archbishop met with the Parish Priests of the Bayside Catholic Mission and the neighbouring parishes of St Agnes, Highett, Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham, St Finbar's, Brighton East, and St Patrick and St John Vianney, Mentone-Parkdale, to discuss a reconfiguration of the parishes in the greater Bayside area; in a letter to the lay faithful on 20 May 2023, the Archbishop indicated the beginning of a review of the effectiveness of the pastoral area known as the 'Bayside Catholic Mission'; the 'Bayside Taskforce' was established on 20 June 2023, chaired by the Vicar-General and involving key diocesan officials, to lead this review; following consultation with each of the parishes, on 18 September 2023 the Bayside Taskforce presented recommendations to the Archbishop on the possible future parish groupings in the greater Bayside area; the Archbishop wrote to the parishioners on 19 October 2023 announcing a re-configuration of the pastoral arrangement of parishes in the area including the merger of St Agnes, Highett, and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham. From 10 March to 18 May 2024, the lay faithful participated in a further consultation process to identify an appropriate name for the new parish.

3. Having considered the law and the facts, the undersigned Diocesan Bishop hereby issues this Decree.

THE LAW

Can. 515 §2 states:

The diocesan bishop alone can erect, suppress or alter parishes. He is not to establish, suppress or notably alter them unless he has consulted the council of priests.

The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand, 1937, decreed that the College of Consultors must also be consulted.

THE ARGUMENT

4. Willingly encouraging everything in my powers to provide more suitably for the good of souls, I have decided that St Agnes Parish, Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham are to be merged and from the merger a new parish, to be named **Christ Our Light Parish, Highett-Cheltenham** is to be established for the following reasons:
5. Taking into consideration questions of social demographics, ecclesial cultures, ministerial workloads and financial viability, there is a need for four parishes in the greater Bayside area; that there is a need for the lay faithful to have a Parish Priest who is not so stretched that he cannot be known or know his people; that these two parishes have been effectively coordinating pastoral care for 4 years under the leadership of one parish priest; and, that on 25 June 2024 the Parish Priest of these two parishes formally requested for the merger of the parishes.
6. Our Lady of the Assumption Parish Cheltenham was originally formed out of St Agnes Parish Highett in 1958. The two parishes have been partnered since 2020 There has been a community expectation that a formal return to the one parish would take place in due course.

Wherefore:

7. having considered the law and the facts; and
8. having heard the parishioners by means of the aforementioned consultations and communications; and
9. having ascertained from deeds and documents and consulted those concerned that there are no major donors to be heard; and
10. having heard the Council of Priests on 15 November 2023 and the College of Consultors on 28 November 2023; and
11. having determined that the good of souls requires it,

12. I, the undersigned Archbishop of Melbourne, exercising my ordinary power and in virtue of canon 515 §2, do hereby decree that St Agnes Parish, Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham be hereto merged together. I decree that from this extinctive-union (merger) of St Agnes Parish, Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham, **Christ Our Light Parish, Highett-Cheltenham** is established with all the rights, obligations and privileges accorded it by law.
13. **Christ Our Light Parish, Highett-Cheltenham** shall comprise the territories of the former parishes of St Agnes Parish, Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham, namely:
14. **A. Commencing at the junction of Exley Drive with Nepean Highway, follow Nepean Highway north-westwards to South Road, then South Road westwards to Bluff Road; thence follow Bluff Road southwards to Bay Road, Bay Road eastwards to Nepean Highway, Nepean Highway north-westwards to Enright Street, Enright Street eastwards to Tennyson Street, and then Tennyson Street northwards to Turner Road; thence follow Turner Road eastwards to Chesterville Road, Chesterville Road northwards to Wickham Road and Wickham Road westwards to Nepean Highway, and then Nepean Highway north-westwards to the junction of Exley Drive – the commencing point. (The former Highett Parish)**
- B. Commencing at its junction with Nepean Highway follow Latrobe Street westwards to Charman Road, Charman Road northwards to Weatherall Road, Weatherall Road westwards to Reserve Road, and then Reserve Road northwards to Bay Road; thence follow Bay Road eastwards to Nepean Highway, Nepean Highway north-westwards to Enright Street, Enright Street north-eastwards to Tennyson Street, and then Tennyson Street north-westwards to Turner Road; thence follow Turner Road eastwards to Chesterville Road, Chesterville Road northwards to Keys Road, Keys Road eastwards to Warrigal Road and then Warrigal Road northwards to South Road; thence follow the route of the Dingley Bypass eastwards to old Dandenong Road, then Plant Grove/Old Dandenong Road south-eastwards to the junction of Ross Street; thence follow Ross Street southwards to Centre Dandenong Road, Centre Dandenong Road westwards to Grange Road, Grange Road southwards to the corner of Voltri Street, Voltri Street westwards to a point in line with the rear of the properties on the eastern sides of Snowdon Drive and Hibiscus Avenue; thence follow a line northwards to and along the rear of the above properties to Centre Dandenong Road, (thus locating all of Kembla Street and Taunton Drive in Cheltenham Parish, and all of Snowdon Drive and Hibiscus Avenue in Mentone Parish); thence follow Centre Dandenong Road westwards to Warrigal Road, Warrigal Road southwards to Oak Avenue, Oak Avenue westwards to Nepean Highway, and then Nepean Highway a short distance south-eastwards to Latrobe Street – the commencing point. (The former Cheltenham Parish)**

Unless otherwise stated boundaries run along the centreline of rivers, creeks, roads, streets, etc.

15. The temporal goods, patrimonial rights and obligations of St Agnes Parish, Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption, Cheltenham are assumed by the new Christ Our Light Parish, Highett-Cheltenham.
16. All the parish and sacramental records of the extinct Parish of Highett and the extinct Parish of Cheltenham are to be properly preserved and safeguarded in the Parish Highett-Cheltenham, in accordance with the norm of law. I order that copies of this decree be carefully preserved in the parochial archives of Christ Our Light Parish Highett-Cheltenham as well as the archives of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
17. This decree is to be effective on **10 August 2024**. I order that this decree be published by copies of it being displayed on the noticeboards of St Agnes church Highett and Our Lady of the Assumption church Cheltenham for one calendar month, and by the decree being drawn to the attention of the faithful by the celebrant of Mass at all parochial Masses in those churches on Saturday evening, 3 August 2024 and Sunday 4 August 2024.
18. This decree is to be communicated to the Parish Priest and Parishioners of the two parishes effected by this extinctive-union (merger). This Decree may be challenged within the peremptory time limit of ten days from the legitimate notification of the Decree and in accordance with the norm of law (Can. 1734 §2).

Given at St Patrick's Centre, East Melbourne, Victoria, on 9 July, 2024.



Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne



Mrs Annie Carrett
Chancellor