



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 THE PARISHES OF
SACRED HEART, DIAMOND CREEK, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,
GREENSBOROUGH,
AND ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, GREENSBOROUGH NORTH**

**AND, AT THE SAME TIME, ESTABLISHING
THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY**

1. A parish is a certain community of Christ's faithful stably established within a diocese, whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan bishop, is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor¹. Each diocese must be divided into parishes, which are distinct parts of the whole diocese. It is the responsibility and authority of the diocesan bishop, and he alone, to erect, alter or suppress parishes, after considering the advice of his presbyteral council.² The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand of 1937 also decreed that consultation must be had with the College of Consultors.³
2. In 1914, the Parish of Diamond Creek was erected under the patronage of the Sacred Heart. At this time the parish covered a vast area including Watsonia, Greensborough, Eltham, Montmorency, Warrandyte, Arthur's Creek, Panton Hill, Queenstown and Kinglake. Due to population growth in the 1950s and 1960s, three new parishes were erected from territory excised from Diamond Creek: Greensborough, Eltham, and Warrandyte. In 2012, Kinglake was excised from Diamond Creek and added to the newly established Parish of Mernda.
3. The Parish of Greensborough was erected under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception in 1955. Construction of the Parish church dedicated to St Mary was completed in 1971. From this time the Parish was commonly referred to as St Mary's.
4. In 1961, the Parish of St Francis Xavier Montmorency was erected from territory excised from Greensborough and, in 1986, the territory was further divided to enable the erection of the Parish of Greensborough North under the patronage of St Thomas the Apostle.
5. In 2012, the Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North were partnered under the care of one Parish Priest. Five years later,

¹ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 515#1

² Cf. *ibid*, can. 515#2

³ Cf. *Concilium plenum IV Australiae et Novae Zelandiae habitum apud Sydney anno Domini 1937*, decr. 148(d).



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in 2017, the Parish Priest of Immaculate Conception, Greensborough was appointed Parish Priest to the three Parishes. Over the intervening years a close relationship has developed between the three Parishes, supported by centralised parish administration and collaborative liturgy planning and formation.

In 2023, a Partnered Parishes Pastoral Council was formed to support and develop a common vision and mission for the three Parishes. In 2025, consolidation of the Parish committees was undertaken to support more effective collaboration in future planning. That same year, the Partnered Parishes Pastoral Council recommended commencement of a consultative and synodal process towards the amalgamation of the three Parishes.

6. On 25 January 2026 the Parish Priest, with the support of the Parish communities, formally petitioned for the amalgamation of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North Parishes.
7. After carefully considering the motivations and observations presented to me, and after the required formal canonical consultation of the Archbishop's Council of Priests given on 5 March 2026 (cf. Canon 515 §2), and the College of Consultors of the Archdiocese of Melbourne on 17 February 2026, I hereby decree the following:
8. **That the Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North be merged together. I decree that from this extinctive union (merger) of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North, the PARISH OF OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY is established with all the rights, obligations and privileges accorded to it by law.**
9. **The Parish of Our Lady of the Valley shall comprise the territories of the former Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North.**

That is for Diamond Creek:

Commencing at the junction of Ryans Road and Allendale Road, proceed north along Ryans Road to the point where the S.E.C. Transmission Line crosses and then along the Transmission Line in a generally north-westerly direction to the Plenty River; then follow that river upstream to the Whittlesea/Nillumbik municipal boundary; then follow that municipal boundary in a northerly direction to Yan Yean Road; then follow Yan Yean Road to Ridge Road, and Ridge Road to the Whittlesea/Nillumbik municipal boundary; then follow the Whittlesea/Nillumbik boundary in a generally northerly direction to the point where the Whittlesea, Murrindindi and Nillumbik municipal boundaries meet; then follow the Murrindindi/Nillumbik boundary in a generally easterly direction to the intersection with the Yarra Ranges municipal boundary; then follow the



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Nillumbik/Yarra Ranges boundary southwards to the former Eltham/Healesville municipal boundary; then follow the former Eltham/Healesville municipal boundary in a generally southerly direction (the latter section of this border is Watsons Creek) to the Yarra River; then follow the Yarra River downstream to Bouchiers Road, Bouchiers Road to Menzies Road, Menzies Road to Henley Road and Henley Road in a generally north-westerly direction to Eltham-Yarra Glen Road; then follow Eltham-Yarra Glen Road in a westerly and then southerly direction as far as Donaldson Road; then follow Donaldson Road to Allendale Road and then westerly along Allendale Road to Ryans Road, the point of commencement.

That is for Greensborough:

Commencing at the point where the Greensborough Bypass crosses the Plenty River, follow the Bypass westwards to its junction with the Metropolitan Ring Road and then continue along the Ring Road to the three-way junction of the Postcodes 3083/3087/3088 boundaries; then follow the Postcodes 3083/3087 boundary in a generally southwards direction to Greenwood Drive and then continue along the eastern boundary of the Gresswell Forest Wildlife Reserve to the former Diamond Valley/Heidelberg municipal boundary; then follow that former municipal boundary eastwards to the Plenty River; then follow the Plenty River upstream (northwards) to the Greensborough Bypass – the point of commencement.

That is for Greensborough North:

Commencing at the intersection of the Maroondah Aqueduct with the Metropolitan Ring Road, follow the Ring Road westwards to Plenty Road and its junction with the Whittlesea/Nillumbik municipal boundary then follow that municipal boundary eastwards to the Plenty River; then follow the Plenty River upstream to the S.E.C. Transmission Line and then the Transmission Line in a generally south-easterly direction to Ryans Road; then follow Ryans Road southwards to Wallowa Road, Wallowa Road westward to St Helenas Road, St Helenas Road south-westwards and westwards to Main Street and then Main Street a short distance to Plenty River; then follow the Plenty River upstream to Greensborough Bypass, Greensborough Bypass westwards to its junction with the Metropolitan Ring Road and then continue along the Ring Road to the intersection of the Maroondah Aqueduct – the point of commencement.

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



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10. Consequently, all the faithful with a domicile or quasi-domicile within this territory shall henceforth belong by law to the **Parish of Our Lady of Valley**,⁴ which will be established by effect of this Decree from **24 May 2026**.
11. I declare the temporal goods, patrimonial rights and obligations of the extinct Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North, are assumed by the **Parish of Our Lady of the Valley**.
12. I declare all the parish and sacramental records of the extinct Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North are to be properly preserved and safeguarded in the **Parish of Our Lady of the Valley**.
13. I declare all civil registrations and ensuing contractual obligations of the extinct Parishes of Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, Immaculate Conception, Greensborough and St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North such as the ABN, ACNC, ATO, utilities etc. will endure in the Parish of Our Lady of the Valley, and the civil registrations and contractual obligations of these extinct Parishes will be transferred into the newly named enduring registrations.
14. The churches of Sacred Heart, St Peter's, St Mary's and St Thomas the Apostle shall continue to enjoy all the rights, duties and prerogatives that they have hitherto acquired while recognising that St Mary's holds the honour of first among equals of the churches.
15. This decree will take effect from **24 May 2026**. I order that this decree be published by copies of it being displayed on the noticeboards of Sacred Heart, St Peter's, St Mary's and St Thomas the Apostle churches for one calendar month, beginning on the 18 April 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 16 May 2026, and Sunday 17 May 2026**.
16. I order that copies of this decree be carefully preserved in the parochial archives of the Parish of Our Lady of the Valley, as well as the archives of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
17. The Second Vatican Council proclaimed that "the parish offers an outstanding example of community apostolate, for it gathers into a unity all the human diversities that are found there and inserts them into the universality of the Church."⁵ I pray that these arrangements that I have decreed will be a rich opportunity for the parishioners of the Parish of Our Lady of the Valley to renew their commitment to the Lord, and to the building up of his Church. I invoke the blessings of Almighty God on the priests and parishioners of this parish.

⁴ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, cann. 102-107, 518

⁵ Cf. Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 18 November 1965, n. 10 (*Vatican Council II*, Austin Flannery O.P. (ed). p. 777)



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Given at St Patrick's Centre, East Melbourne, Victoria on this sixteen day of the month of April
in the year of Our Lord, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter A Comensoli', written over a dotted line.

Most Reverend Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Coun', written over a dotted line.

Notary