



## *Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston*

### *Office of Communications*

#### **St. Joseph-St. Stephen Parish Merger Fact Sheet**

##### **Merger Process**

- In August, 2014, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo informed parishioners at St. Joseph and St. Stephen Churches about his intention to merge them after receiving feedback from pastors and lay leaders at both parishes that a merger would result in a positive outcome for both communities.
- A Merger Committee was formed with representatives of both parishes to plan and coordinate all aspects required to combine the two faith communities into one.
- The merger is the culmination of 22 months of collaboration between parishioners and clergy of both former churches, which were located within a half-mile of each other in the Sixth Ward, near the Washington Corridor north of downtown Houston.

##### **Decree of Merger**

- During Masses on the weekend of Feb. 13 and 14, 2016, parishioners at St. Joseph and St. Stephen Catholic Churches received an official decree announcing the merger of the two parishes to form one community: St. Joseph-St. Stephen Catholic Church.
- Anyone from St. Joseph or St. Stephen Parishes who had an interest had a right to challenge the merger.
- One challenge to the Merger Decree was timely filed and the period for seeking recourse has passed. After receiving the parishioners' request, the Holy See chose not to suspend the Archdiocese's Decree of Merger, allowing the merger to proceed.

##### **Merger Mass – May 8, 2016**

- Cardinal DiNardo celebrated a Merger Mass on May 8 with more than 500 parishioners from St. Joseph-St. Stephen attending.
- The new parish of St. Joseph-St. Stephen is located at the site of the former St. Joseph's on 1505 Kane Street. The parish will be staffed by the Priests of Missionaries of St. Joseph (MJ).
- When the property of the former St. Stephen Church is sold, ALL PROCEEDS will be transferred to the parish of St. Joseph-St. Stephen Church.
- During the Mass, the former pastor of St. Stephen Church, Father Cesar Lomeli, MJ, was installed as the pastor of St. Joseph-St. Stephen Church by Cardinal DiNardo.