



**Most Reverend Louis Tylka**  
Diocese of Peoria  
Office of the Bishop

**ST. MARY IN ATLANTA**

May 18, 2024

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we celebrate the great Solemnity of Pentecost, we recall the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and the birth of the Church. This gift of the Holy Spirit continues to be poured out upon the Church and upon us. I chose Pentecost intentionally as the day when we reach an important milestone in our two-year Growing Disciples planning process with the announcement about our parishes and churches. Thank you for your participation, your feedback, and your advice which have helped me make the decisions that are announced today.

I spent time in further prayer, study and discernment over the recommendations that were made to me by the extensive process of consultation which occurred. I have reached the following decision regarding Holy Family, St. Mary, St. Patrick, and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Holy Family in Lincoln, St. Mary in Atlanta, St. Patrick in Elkhart, and St. Thomas Aquinas in Mt. Pulaski will be merged into one parish with a primary worship site at Holy Family in Lincoln.

Fr. Joseph Dondanville will remain your pastor. Fr. Nicodemus Muithi will remain your parochial vicar.

The implementation phase will begin in all parishes on July 1, 2024. The process of implementing this change is expected to be completed over the next 36 months. In order to adapt to this merger of parishes, it will be necessary to determine the new Mass schedule. I ask you to work with your pastor to arrange a schedule of four weekend Masses between the churches of the parish. I also ask you to study the churches in Atlanta, Elkhart, and Mt. Pulaski to determine which are the most viable and which may be consolidated.

**Phone**  
309 671-1550

**Address**  
419 N.E. Madison Avenue,  
Peoria, Illinois 61603

**Website**  
[cdop.org](http://cdop.org)

I am asking every parish to engage in a process of renewal. Every parish is asked to evaluate its schedule of Masses, its programs of pastoral care and evangelization. I challenge every parish to be more intense in cultivating disciples. More information about this call to become a more vibrant parish will be released in the coming months.

I ask for your continued prayers and continued cooperation as we work together to strengthen and renew our Diocese in this new apostolic age. Know that I pray for you daily. May the Holy Spirit bless all our efforts to Grow Disciples.

Venerable Archbishop Sheen - pray for us!

Peace and Prayers,

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✦ Most Reverend Louis Tylka  
Bishop of Peoria