

# GROWING DISCIPLES

PASTORAL PLAN FOR THE DIOCESE OF PEORIA

Since coming to the “Heart of Illinois,” Bishop Louis Tylka has experienced firsthand the faith and good works of our priests, religious and laypeople, and he has listened to the people of the Diocese of Peoria. In response to what he has learned, Bishop Tylka has announced that the diocese is embarking upon a pastoral planning process called **Growing Disciples**, with the goal of moving further into the mission which Christ has given us: to go and make disciples.



Over the next two years, the people of our diocese will together engage in a time of prayer, dialogue and discernment to look to the future of our Church across north central Illinois. We have inherited a rich legacy from previous generations who built up our local communities of faith, and our work in this process is to honor their legacy by ensuring a bright future of bringing others to Christ Jesus.

We invite you to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we embark on this journey, using the prayer found on the back of this page. We also invite you to follow along as we share updates on this process, and to engage in the opportunities that we will offer to share your feedback.

Let us be the fertile soil which will yield an abundant harvest for the Kingdom of God.



## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA

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For more information,  
please visit  
[cdop.org/pastoral-plan](https://cdop.org/pastoral-plan)



▶ The **Growing Disciples** pastoral planning process will examine the current structure of parishes and schools to evaluate how they can best meet the needs of the faithful and address challenges facing the Church today.

The primary goals of the pastoral planning process are to:

- Enable the faithful to go make disciples within a mission-driven, sustainable structure of parishes and schools.
- Enhance the vibrancy of our parishes, schools and ministries.
- Increase our support of the happiness, health and holiness of our priests.

▶ **Why are we doing this? Why now?**

The Church and its people continue to face unique opportunities and challenges as society evolves. In Illinois, and certainly in the Diocese of Peoria, the demographic landscape looks different than it did even 10 years ago, while the structural landscape has remained nearly the same.

▶ **The current challenges facing our diocese include:**

- A changing regional and diocesan landscape
- National trends regarding religion
- Too few priests to staff more than 150 parishes.

While we have a strong and vibrant faith community, the current structural landscape combined with the above challenges limits our ability to fully live out our God-given mission as Catholics.

### **Growing Disciples: Pastoral Plan Prayer**

*Heavenly Father, you have sown the seeds of faith in your people and given us the responsibility as the Church to nurture and grow an abundant harvest for the Kingdom of God.*

*Send forth, we pray, the grace of the Holy Spirit to allow us to discern a path forward as we read the signs of our times. Help us become unified in the dream you have for us — to be a vibrant and mission-driven Church.*

*As we seek to live as disciples of your Son, Jesus, inspire us to give authentic witness to our relationship with you, so that others may be inspired by our love for you. Center us and feed us by the gift of the Eucharist that we may be strengthened for our mission. May each of us live out our vocation in service of the Gospel.*

*Almighty God, may we enter into this challenge and opportunity as a people filled with hope. Allow us to truly pray, dialogue, assess, discern and do what it is you are inviting us to, so that we may respond to today's needs and tomorrow's promise.*

*Committing ourselves anew to GROWING DISCIPLES, we trust in your providence, and we pray, Almighty God, that our efforts today will bear fruit for a brighter tomorrow.*

*Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen, pray for us!*

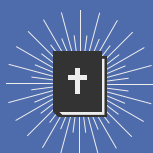


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Growing Disciples will also advance Bishop Tylka's five foundations for the diocese:



Inspire discipleship in each baptized follower of Jesus.



Empower evangelization so as to share the saving name of Jesus.



Deepen our awareness of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.



Strengthen vocations to the priesthood and religious life.



Continue the legacy of Archbishop Fulton Sheen.