



Solemnity of Pentecost 2023

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This weekend the Church throughout the world celebrates the Solemnity of Pentecost, and so commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, the foundation of the Church, and the beginning of her mission to all nations and peoples.

The mystery of Pentecost exhorts us to prayer and commitment to mission. The Holy Spirit inspires faith, hope, and charity in the hearts of the faithful, and ennobles the numerous and varied ways of transmitting the Christian message according to the culture and customs of all times and places. While giving us access to communion with God in prayer, the Holy Spirit also prompts us towards service of our neighbor by encountering him, by reconciliation, by witness, by a desire for justice and peace, by renewal of outlook, by social progress, and missionary commitment.

Almost two years ago, we as an Archdiocese embarked upon a strategic pastoral planning process, *All Things New*. We prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and we committed ourselves to you, the faithful of this Archdiocese. An extensive process of listening was undertaken in all the parishes. Thereafter, I consulted the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council regarding every parish under consideration. I then spent time in further prayer, study, and discernment, after which I reached the following decision regarding our St. Lawrence parish.

Your parish will be subsumed into St. Agnes parish in Bloomsdale, effective August 1, 2023. The reason that forms the basis of my decision will be outlined in the decree concerning your parish and will be published at [allthingsnew.archstl.org](http://allthingsnew.archstl.org) by Sunday afternoon, May 28. Any member of your parish who claims to have been aggrieved by this Decree has the right to ask me to change my decision. This request must be made in writing and postmarked no later than June 12, 2023, to me at the Cardinal Rigali Center.

In order to best provide for the needs of our local Church, I have decided to appoint your pastor, the Reverend Michael Benz, as pastor of St. Joseph parish in Apple Creek and St. Maurus parish in Biehle, effective August 1. May I kindly ask that you express your gratitude to your pastor for his dedicated service in your parish.

Your new pastor is Reverend Ryan Weber. Because of my responsibility to provide pastoral care for our entire Archdiocese through the equitable distribution of priests, your new pastor, the Reverend Ryan Weber, is also appointed pastor of St. Joseph parish in Zell. I have every confidence that he will warmly welcome you to your new parish.

Please join me in praying for those among the faithful of the Archdiocese who will also be hearing challenging news this weekend regarding their parish. May the Holy Spirit draw us all closer together as we rededicate ourselves to new modes of evangelization and social outreach in bearing witness to our faith in Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski  
Archbishop of St. Louis