

DECREE

The merger of St. Mary Parish of Winnebago, Minnesota, with Sts. Peter and Paul Parish of Blue Earth, Minnesota

St. Mary Parish of Winnebago, Minnesota, was founded in 1893, serving the faithful of the area for 130 years. In 2011 the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, with the assistance of professional consultants, embarked upon Vision 2016: a comprehensive visioning and planning process aimed at providing opportunities to enhance the pastoral care of the faithful, address shortages in clergy, and evaluate current parish structures in light of changing demographic trends. As Pastoral Planning efforts continued in light of the Vision 2016 process, and with further demographic decline, conversations were held with St. Mary Parish and Sts. Peter and Paul Parish and diocesan leadership, and topics of discussion included the possible merger of St. Mary Parish with Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. Guidance was solicited from the Presbyteral Council throughout the pastoral planning process.

In a letter presented on October 20, 2022, the current Pastor of St. Mary Parish and Sts. Peter and Paul Parish proposed that St. Mary Parish be merged into Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. The proposal included documentation as to the current plan to no longer have Mass celebrated in the building, the recommendation of the parish leadership to merge the parishes, and the lack of fiscal and human resources necessary to properly maintain the structure.

On December 13, 2022, the Presbyteral Council provided consultation, in accord with canon 515, §§2, 3, concerning the proposal that St. Mary Parish be merged (*unio extinctiva*) into Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. Upon full discussion, at which time due consideration was given to reasons for and against the proposed merger, and with opportunity to suggest alternate courses of action, members of the Presbyteral Council expressed unanimous agreement in favor of the proposed merger.

The following just causes suggest that St. Mary Parish be merged into Sts. Peter and Paul Parish:

- 1) The declining number of faithful attending Mass and the limited quantity of additional sacramental experiences;
- 2) The enhancement of collaborative ministry and to ensure the best utilization of priest personnel;
- 3) The recent and projected shifts in populations, moving from rural to urban settings;
- 4) A consolidation of human resources directed toward strengthening the quality of the liturgy and encouraging fuller active participation;

5) To better effect the preaching and spread of the Gospel.

Accordingly, in virtue of the prescription of canon 121 and 515, §2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, having judged that just causes are present, that the intentions of donors and any other acquired rights have been examined and given due consideration, and that the good of souls will not thereby be impaired,

**I HEREBY DECREE AN EXTINCTIVE UNION BY WHICH
ST. MARY PARISH OF WINNEBAGO, MINNESOTA
BE MERGED INTO
STS. PETER AND PAUL PARISH OF BLUE EARTH, MINNESOTA.**

Furthermore, the newly established territorial boundaries of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish are to be:

Starting in the southwest corner of the parish: at the intersection of the Minnesota / Iowa Border and 310th Avenue, head north on 310th Avenue to 80th Street. Head west on 80th Street to 280th Avenue. Head north on 280th Avenue to 240th Street. Head east on 240th Street to 450th Avenue. Head south on 450th Avenue to 70th Street. Head east on 70th Street to 510th Avenue. Head south on 510th Avenue to the Minnesota / Iowa border. Head west on the Minnesota/Iowa border to the starting point.

Upon the completion of the transfer of such assets and liabilities, the civil corporation of the St. Mary Parish shall take such actions at civil law as are necessary to dissolve itself. Furthermore, any other patrimony, including sacramental records, deaths, and items or documents of historical or spiritual significance shall be transferred to Sts. Peter and Paul Parish.

This decree becomes effective February 1, 2023. A copy of this decree is to be sent to the pastor of St. Mary Parish and Sts. Peter and Paul Parish and its contents is to be communicated at all of the Masses of obligation on the weekend of Saturday, January 7, 2023, and Sunday, January 8, 2023. Furthermore, this decree is to be published on the diocesan website. Any legitimate party, considering himself aggrieved by this decree, retains the right to request emendation or revocation within ten (10) useful days (c. 1734 §§1, 2).

Given in the Diocese of Winona-Rochester on this 5th day of January in the year of Our Lord 2023.

+Robert Barron

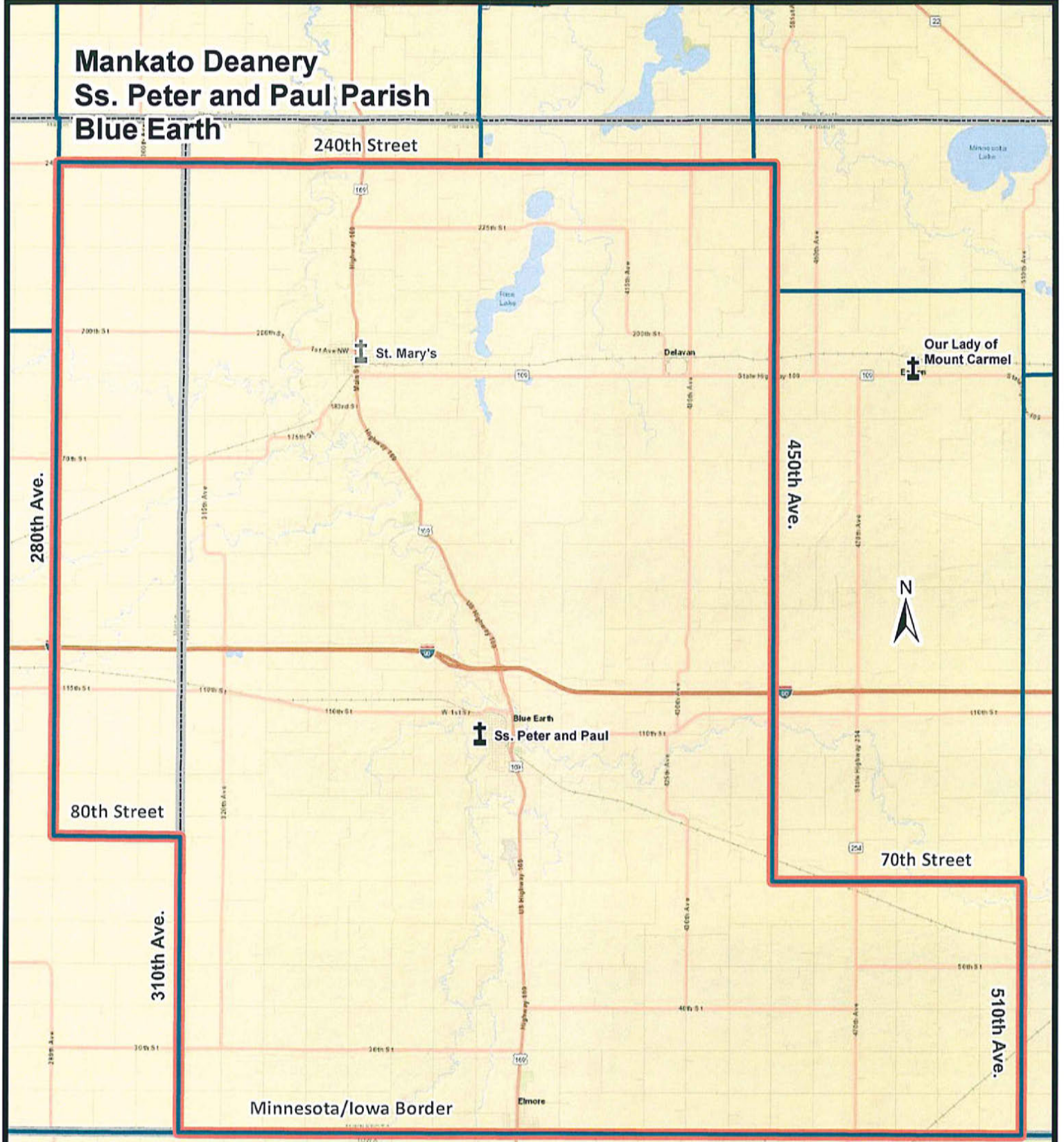
The Most Reverend Robert Barron
Bishop of Winona-Rochester

Andrew D. Brannon






Vice Chancellor

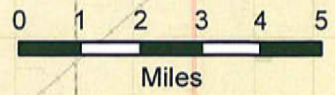


**Mankato Deanery
Ss. Peter and Paul Parish
Blue Earth**



Legend

	Open Parish		Mankato Deanery Parish Boundary
	Closed Parish		County Boundary
	Ss. Peter and Paul Parish		



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community