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Coadjutor Bishop Louis Tylka, left, and Bishop Daniel R. Jenky are seen at St. Mary's Cathedra

Coadjutor Bishop Louis Tylka, left, and Bishop Daniel R. Jenky are seen at St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria, Ill., Feb. 23, 2022. Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Bishop Jenky March 3, 2022, and as coadjutor, Bishop Tylka immediately succeeds him as head of the Peoria Diocese. Bishop Jenky is 75, the age at which canon law requires bishops to turn in their resignation to the pope. (CNS photo/Ben Wilson, courtesy Diocese of Peoria)

Tom Dermody

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Peoria, Ill. — March 3, 2022

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Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Peoria and Coadjutor Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria immediately succeeds him, becoming the ninth bishop of Peoria.

Bishop Jenky has headed the Peoria Diocese for nearly 20 years. His resignation was announced March 3 in Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican nuncio to the United States.

On the same day, Bishop Jenky turned 75, the age at which canon law requires bishops to submit their resignation to the pope.

Bishop Tylka, 51, has served as coadjutor bishop for 19 months. A former priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, he was appointed by Pope Francis to assist Bishop Jenky May 11, 2020, and was ordained a bishop July 23, 2020. A coadjutor automatically becomes head of the diocese upon the death or retirement of its bishop.

In a video released on the Diocese of Peoria's YouTube channel and website, Bishop Tylka said his time as coadjutor bishop allowed him the opportunity to become familiar with the 26-county diocese, its clergy, religious and lay faithful.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed visiting folks in parishes, schools and institutions and seeing the faith alive in so many wonderful ways," said Bishop Tylka. "This gives me great hope for the future."

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Noting his episcopal motto of "Go Make Disciples," Bishop Tylka said he is "committed to work each day to bring people to an authentic encounter with Jesus Christ, to build on the communion that we share, and to give missionary disciple witness to the Gospel that brings us salvation."

In a March 3 statement, Bishop Jenky said Bishop Tylka "has selflessly given himself in service to the people of the Diocese of Peoria since his ordination. I am confident that the faithful will find him to be a loving and dedicated shepherd."

A native of Harvey, Illinois, Bishop Tylka was born May 26, 1970. He studied for the priesthood at Niles College Seminary of Loyola University Chicago and the University of St. Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois.

Bishop Tylka was ordained a Chicago archdiocesan priest in 1996. He is a former pastor of Mater Christi Parish and the Shrine of Mary, Mother of Mothers, in North Riverside, Illinois. He was serving as pastor of St. Julie Billiart Parish in Tinley Park, Illinois, and chair of the Chicago Archdiocese's priests' council when he was appointed to Peoria in 2020.

While taking necessary COVID-19 pandemic precautions, Bishop Tylka immediately embarked on a "welcome tour" throughout the Diocese of Peoria, meeting the priests and celebrating Masses in each of the diocese's 12 vicariates.

Last fall, he repeated the tour, inviting representatives from each parish to share their lived experience of the faith and calling it "Listening to the Faithful."

In his March 3 video, Bishop Tylka said that while the world faces many challenges, "I am convinced that if we stay focused on Christ, if we live as missionary disciples, and if we call upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, then no matter what difficulties that confront us, together we will advance on our way to the kingdom of Heaven. After all, isn't that our one goal?"

Bishop Jenky, a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross, served for 25 years at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, including two decades as rector of Sacred Heart Basilica on campus. He was ordained as an auxiliary bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, Dec. 16, 1997, and served there for five years before his appointment to Peoria Feb. 12, 2002.

He expressed deep gratitude for his 20 years as diocesan bishop. Bishop Jenky leaves a legacy that includes several major construction projects, including the Spalding Pastoral Center and the diocese's new Sacre-Coeur Retreat Center, dedicated last summer.

Shortly after his arrival in Peoria, Bishop Jenky launched the sainthood cause of media pioneer and author Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, a native and priest of the diocese, and worked persistently to advance it in ensuing years.

As he approached his 75th birthday, in an interview in February with The Catholic Post, Peoria's diocesan newspaper, Bishop Jenky said the Vatican remains "very enthusiastic about the cause," and that Bishop Tylka is, too.

"I'm hopeful and prayerful that Bishop Lou will bring the ball across the goal line," said Bishop Jenky of an anticipated beatification ceremony in Peoria.

In Bishop Tylka's video, he asks that "Venerable Fulton Sheen intercede for us, so that every effort we make in witnessing to the Gospel may bear fruit for the Kingdom of Heaven."

Bishop Tylka will celebrate his first public Mass as Peoria's bishop March 6 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria. The Mass will be streamed live on the Diocese of Peoria's YouTube channel.