



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

PRESSRELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Twin Cities' auxiliary bishop named ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines

Des Moines, Iowa – Auxiliary Bishop Richard E. Pates, of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, has been named today by Pope Benedict XVI as the ninth bishop for the Diocese of Des Moines. He will be installed May 29.

A 10 a.m. news conference will be held today, April 10, at the Catholic Pastoral Center, 601 Grand Ave. in Des Moines. Bishop Pates will celebrate Mass across the street at St. Ambrose Cathedral, 607 High St., at 12:10 p.m. He plans to visit Dowling Catholic High School, 1400 Buffalo Road in West Des Moines, at 2 p.m. He will visit with diocesan staff, priests, deacons and sisters at the Catholic Pastoral Center at 4 p.m., and then have dinner at Catholic Charities' St. Joseph Emergency Family Shelter, 1535 11th St. in Des Moines at 6 p.m.

Bishop Pates said: "I am ever so grateful to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, for appointing me as the ninth bishop of Des Moines. It is a welcome privilege to be called to serve such a vibrant, spirited community in America's heartland. It is a particular honor to succeed Bishop Charron, a good friend and a conscientious shepherd and effective leader."

The appointment comes exactly one year after Bishop Joseph L. Charron, C.P.P.S. announced his retirement. "I am very pleased with the announcement of Pope Benedict's appointment of Bishop Richard Pates as the next bishop of Des Moines," said Bishop Charron in

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a statement. “Personally, I have known Bishop Pates for many years, since we worked closely together in Washington, D.C, in the late ’70s. I consider him a friend and look forward to working with him in serving the good people of southwest Iowa.”

Until Bishop Pates is installed, Msgr. Stephen Orr will continue serving as administrator for the diocese. “I am very happy that Bishop Pates will be our new bishop,” said Msgr. Orr. “He has such a wide variety of ministry experiences that he can bring to our diocese. He is a good people person who will endear himself to the people of the diocese in a very short time, I am sure.”

Bishop Pates is the third consecutive auxiliary bishop from the Twin Cities to be appointed bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines. Bishop Charron and Bishop William H. Bullock also served the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, said: “I am delighted that Bishop Pates has been named by the Holy Father to become ordinary of the Diocese of Des Moines. He is a person of outstanding quality and exemplary administrative ability with a pastoral touch that is sorely needed in the church today. I will miss him, but I send him to the priests, women religious and people of Des Moines with my best wishes and congratulate them for receiving such an outstanding leader.”

Education

Bishop Pates, 65, was born in St. Paul, Minn., and attended Nazareth Hall Seminary there. He attended St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Latin. He resided at the North American College in Rome for seminary formation and holds a license in Sacred Theology in Dogmatics from the Gregorian University in Rome, and was ordained a priest by Bishop Francis E. Reh in 1968 at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

Service

Bishop Pates has held a number of pastoral and administrative roles.

1969-1970 -- Associate Pastor, Church of the Blessed Sacrament, St. Paul

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- 1970-1974 – Vocation director, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, weekend associate pastor at the Church of the Annunciation, Minneapolis.
- 1973-1975 – Secretary to Archbishop Leo C. Byrne, and vice chancellor of the archdiocese
- 1975-1981 – Secretary to the Apostolic Delegation (Vatican representation in the United States) in Washington, D.C., and weekend assisting priest at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Chevy Chase, Maryland. In 1979, he was named a monsignor and appointed a chaplain to Pope John Paul II.
- 1981-1987 – Rector of St. John Vianney Seminary, St. Paul; 1981-1990 also served as chaplain of the Serra Club of Midway in St. Paul
- 1987-1990 – Vicar for Seminaries
- 1990 – 1998 -- Pastor, Church of St. Kevin, Minneapolis and the Church of the Resurrection, Minneapolis. In 1991, the two parishes merged to form the Church of Our Lady of Peace, Minneapolis where he remained as pastor. During this period he also served as moderator for the Minneapolis Deaneries Council of Catholic Women (1990-1998).
- 1998-2001 – Founding Pastor, Church of St. Ambrose, Woodbury
- Dec. 22, 2000 – Appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.
- March 26, 2001 – Ordained a bishop at the Cathedral of St. Paul, in St. Paul.
- 2001–present – Assisting Archbishop Harry J. Flynn in serving the approximately 650,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Background

Bishop Charron announced his retirement for health reasons one year ago today. Two days later, the diocesan College of Consultors elected Msgr. Stephen Orr, pastor of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny, to serve as the administrator of the diocese in the absence of a bishop. He will continue to serve in that role until the installation.

The Diocese of Des Moines serves about 97,000 people in 82 parishes in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa.