



# NEWS

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## **Pope Francis Accepts Resignation of Bishop Richard Pates, Appoints Rev. William Joensen as Bishop Elect of Diocese of Des Moines**

July 18, 2019

WASHINGTON—Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of the Most Reverend Richard Pates from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Des Moines. The Pope has appointed as Bishop-Elect of the same see the Rev. William Joensen of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. The appointment was publicized in Washington, DC, on July 18, 2019 by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.

Father Joensen was born on July 8, 1960 In Waterloo, Iowa. He attended seminary at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio and received a degree in Theology. He was ordained as a priest of the Archdiocese of Dubuque on June 24, 1989. Father Joensen also holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America in 2001.

Past assignments include: Associate Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish (1989-1992), Faculty of Columbus High School (1989-1992), Associate Pastor, Church of the Resurrection (1992-1995), and Chaplain of Clarke College (2003-2010). He currently serves as Dean of Spiritual Life at Loras College and Spiritual Director of St. Pius X Seminary in Dubuque.

Bishop Richard Pates was born on February 12, 1943 in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He studied at the Pontifical North America College, and was ordained to the priesthood on December 20, 1968. On December 22, 2000, Pope John Paul II appointed Bishop Pates as Auxiliary Bishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In 2008, Pope Benedict XVI named Bishop Pates the ninth bishop of the Diocese of De Moines. Bishop Pates served as Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace. Bishop Richard Pates submitted his letter of resignation to Pope Francis in February 2018.

The Diocese of Des Moines is comprised of 12,446 square miles and has a total population of 837,773 of which 103,430 or 12.3 percent, are Catholic.

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