



OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

## ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

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June 27, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the Diocese of Knoxville,

As you are likely aware, the Most Reverend Richard F. Stika has resigned as Bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville and the Holy Father has accepted his resignation. While I remain Archbishop of Louisville with my responsibilities there, the Holy Father has appointed me as the temporary Apostolic Administrator of Knoxville. I offer gratitude to Bishop Stika for his 14 years of episcopal ministry. I extend to him my best wishes and prayers as he assumes his new role as Bishop Emeritus, or retired bishop. Please join me in praying for Bishop Stika, as we ask for his continued prayers for us.

I willingly accept my appointment as your Apostolic Administrator, which is effective only until a new Bishop of Knoxville is named by Pope Francis and subsequently installed. Until that time, I will do my best to provide spiritual support to you, the lay faithful, and to priests, deacons, seminarians, and consecrated men and women of Knoxville. Together we will prayerfully address all the pastoral needs before us.

The Holy Father has also appointed me to see to the temporary administration of Knoxville. It is my plan in the coming days to name a priest from the Diocese of Knoxville to assist in caring for the diocese. This priest will assist me in ensuring that the spiritual, administrative, and practical needs of the diocese are met efficiently and appropriately.

Acknowledging the short notice, I invite you to join me for the Celebration of the Eucharist at the **Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus this Wednesday evening, June 28, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.** All lay faithful along with priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, and seminarians are invited to join me in prayer for the needs of this great local church. As we do so, I ask that we pray for an openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit during this time of transition for the Diocese of Knoxville.

Please pray for me, as I continue to pray for you. May God bless you, and please know that I remain,

Sincerely in the Lord,

Archbishop of Louisville  
Apostolic Administrator of Diocese of Knoxville