



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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NEWS RELEASE

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**Statement on the Retirement of
Cardinal Donald Wuerl as Archbishop of Washington
by
Kim Viti Fiorentino
Chancellor and General Counsel of the Archdiocese of Washington**

The news that our Holy Father has accepted Cardinal Wuerl's resignation as Archbishop of Washington fills me with both profound sadness and, at the same time, deep appreciation and admiration for the Cardinal's abundant, sacrificial love for our archdiocese which he has tirelessly served for the past twelve years.

Cardinal Wuerl's decision to ask the Holy Father to allow him to retire came after prayer and reflection, in view of the news we have all confronted. This includes the Archbishop McCarrick scandal, the Archbishop Viganò allegations and particularly the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report. This report targeted six dioceses in Pennsylvania and touched upon the Cardinal's tenure as Bishop of Pittsburgh from 1988-2006 before he became our Archbishop. Unfortunately, the Cardinal's pioneering leadership in the enhancement, implementation and enforcement of historically innovative and rigorous child protection policies was overshadowed by the report's flaws and its interpretation by media.

Cardinal Wuerl reflected on the impact these realities have had upon the Archdiocese. As the Holy Father reflects in his letter, although he would have been justified to move forward with challenging many of the assertions that have been lodged against him, Cardinal Wuerl decided to forgo his personal interest out of love for the people entrusted to his care. He chose to take the step that would allow the Archdiocese of Washington to move beyond these difficulties and to focus, under new leadership, on healing, renewing and revitalizing our beautiful archdiocesan community, that is the Church of Washington.

We have been profoundly blessed to have this great priest as our archbishop and his final decision to act in favor of the people he loved and served for twelve years is the most eloquent witness to the integrity of his ministry and his legacy. I am truly thankful for his steadfast fidelity and his courageous and sacrificial commitment to the future of the Church in Washington.

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