

# The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

# NEWS RELEASE



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## Statements on the appointments of two new Auxiliary Bishops of Washington by Pope Leo XIV

*The Holy Father has named Father Gary Studniewski and Father Robert Boxie III as Auxiliary Bishops of Washington and accepted Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr.'s resignation and appointed Bishop Evelio Menjivar to West Virginia diocese.*

Note: Biographical information on the Bishops-Elect can be found in the media advisory [here](#).

### ***Statement from Cardinal Robert McElroy, Archbishop of Washington:***

I am delighted to share with you the news that today Pope Leo has appointed Father Gary Studniewski and Father Robert Boxie to be Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese of Washington. Both are exemplary leaders in our local church, and they will provide great wisdom, counsel and collaboration to me and selfless priestly service to the entire People of God in the District and the five Maryland counties.

Today the Holy Father has also announced the appointment of Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala to be the new bishop of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia. All of you understand how great a loss this is for the Archdiocese. Bishop Menjivar's pastoral love and zeal, as well as his passion for justice and sensitive care for the Hispanic and immigrant communities of our Archdiocese have planted seeds of grace that will yield a harvest here for decades to come. Our consolation is that the people of West Virginia will have a splendid new bishop to continue the work that Bishop Brennan has undertaken there, and for that we give thanks.

Finally, Pope Leo also announced today that he has accepted the resignation of Bishop Roy Campbell as auxiliary bishop of Washington. To Bishop Campbell, who has so magnificently served as pastor and shepherd within our local church, our only words must be thanks. It was a great gift to the Archdiocese that God called Bishop Campbell from his life as a successful banking executive to enter the pathway to the priesthood and ultimately the episcopate. His wisdom, prudence, and love for Our Lord and Our Lady, combined with a keen mind for administration and a caring heart for the poor and the marginalized to provide for us a magnificent leader for the life of our Archdiocese. And his particular care for the black communities of our Archdiocese is an

immense grace to our local church. Bishop Campbell will continue as pastor of Saint Joseph until July. It is a fitting tribute to him that Bishop-Elect Boxie, whom Bishop Campbell formed in his first assignment, now has been appointed a bishop on the same day that Bishop Campbell retires as auxiliary bishop.

I give thanks to Pope Leo for his great care for the people of the Archdiocese of Washington, and for providing to our local church and to the people of West Virginia such splendid episcopal leadership. And I thank Cardinal Christophe Pierre, who has done so much to make these appointments possible during his service as our Papal Nuncio.

### ***Statement from Bishop-Elect Gary R. Studniewski***

It was in the Church of Washington in 1987 that I encountered Christ in a powerful way, and a great desire to serve his Church emerged from that. The happiest day of my life was being ordained a priest of Washington in 1995.

In 2016 I retired from the U.S. Army, having been away from the archdiocese for eighteen years as a priest chaplain. I longed to return to the Church of Washington. I so wanted to be a pastor and to serve the beautiful and diverse church that I fell in love with in 1987. It has been a great blessing for me to serve as Pastor at St. Peter's Church on Capitol Hill, and at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. These have been the happiest years of my priesthood.

Although totally unexpected and unimagined, I humbly embrace the call to be a bishop. I am grateful to Almighty God for his never-failing mercy. The Lord said to me, "My grace is enough for you, for in weakness power reaches perfection." The Lord has supplied grace after grace throughout my priesthood. I rely now on that grace to faithfully serve the Church of Washington for the rest of my days.

I strongly desire to support Cardinal McElroy in achieving the goals for pastoral action he has established. I have always been very, very proud to be a part of this extraordinary presbyterate. As the archbishop allows, I am eager to support my brother priests in their life and ministry. And it will give me particular delight to travel across the archdiocese and minister to the People of God in parishes of such rich diversity.

I thank the Holy Father and Cardinal McElroy for the call to serve. It is exciting for me to be a bishop for the Church of Washington, and I am delighted to be a part of this church on mission.

### ***Statement from Bishop-Elect Robert P. Boxie III***

I am both overwhelmed and deeply humbled but grateful to the Holy Father Pope Leo for appointing me as one of the new auxiliary bishops of the Archdiocese of Washington. To say this is unexpected is an understatement—God's plans are not our plans! I am especially grateful for the support of Cardinal McElroy and the confidence of my brother priests as I begin this new role. I pray every day—and I ask you to pray with me—that I live up to the full responsibility of this sacred duty now entrusted to me with wisdom, pastoral charity, and zeal, always relying on the help of God.

Bishop Campbell, I want to thank you in a particular way as you enter retirement. You have served this Archdiocese faithfully and with great dedication. I know this personally, having had the

privilege of serving as your parochial vicar for three years at St. Joseph in Largo. Your example of hard work and faithful service carried out with a pastor's heart has meant a great deal to me, especially knowing that you had not one, but two full-time jobs. It is a great honor to follow you as an auxiliary bishop.

Finally, I believe this appointment represents something much bigger than me. It's an acknowledgement of the community that I come from and that has formed me in the faith, especially my family and my home parish; it recognizes the community I now serve, especially the students and young people at Howard University and parishioners at Immaculate Conception here in DC; and it underscores the vitality, vibrancy, and diversity of this local Church here in Washington to which I belong.

I look forward to working with you Cardinal McElroy, my brother bishops, my brother priests, archdiocesan staff, religious women and men, and all the lay faithful as together we bring the Good News of the Gospel and the hope of the Risen Christ to all throughout the Archdiocese of Washington and beyond. Today is spiritually rich and full of many graces—the graces of First Friday dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the name of my home parish; the graces and intercession of the Blessed Mother as we begin this month of May dedicated to her, and the feast of St. Joseph the Worker—I ask for all the spiritual graces that I will need to faithfully and joyfully serve this local Church in Washington.

### ***Statement from Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala***

I give thanks to God for the many ways He has revealed His love and mercy in my life, and to the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, for entrusting me with the pastoral care of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

This diocese, which encompasses the entire state of West Virginia, lies in the heart of the Appalachian region, a land of striking beauty, rich in diversity and natural resources. At the same time, it is a place where much of the people have endured a long history of hardship, marginalization, and inequality. Yet, as it often happens, its people have been sustained by a resilient and enduring faith.

I receive this appointment with deep joy and humility. I look forward to sharing in the struggles and hopes of the people entrusted to my care, and to walk with them as their shepherd leading them to Christ and to witnessing the Gospel. I ask for your prayers, that the Lord may sustain me and grant me the wisdom, strength, and prudence to carry out this ministry with love and fidelity.

The Archdiocese of Washington has been my home for more than 32 years. It is here where I heard the call to the priesthood, received my formation, and where I have served as a priest for over two decades. The faithful of the Archdiocese of Washington, and in a particular way the Hispanic community, have been my teachers in the faith. Their trust, resilience, and generous spirit of service have profoundly shaped my priesthood and my own faith. This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when we walked together and served the suffering community. As an immigrant community, we have also supported one another, and through these trials our faith has deepened and our hope and trust in the Lord strengthened. From all of you, I have learned, above all, that Jesus truly walks with us.

I am deeply grateful to Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the Holy Father's representative in the United States, for conveying this news; to Cardinal Robert McElroy, who has been a father and mentor to

me this last year; and to Cardinal Wilton Gregory, who ordained me a bishop. I also extend my gratitude to Cardinal Donald Wuerl and to my brother bishops, s Campbell and Esposito for their support and willingness to share with me their knowledge and wisdom. In a special way, I thank the priests, deacons, and all the People of God of the Archdiocese of Washington, who have helped form me as a priest and now as a bishop.

I humbly ask for your prayers as I begin this new chapter in my life and faith journey. Be assured of my prayers for you. May Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Saint Joseph intercede for us all.

I have also received with great joy the news that the Holy Father has appointed Fr. Gary Studniewski and Fr. Robert P. Boxie III as auxiliary bishops. They are two of the finest and most dedicated priests of the Archdiocese of Washington. Congratulations to both.

### ***Statement from Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr.***

It is with tremendous joy and elation, that I learned of Pope Leo XIV's appointment of two new Auxiliary Bishops for the Archdiocese of Washington, Reverend Robert Boxie and Reverend Gary Studniewski.

Bishops-Elect Boxie and Studniewski bring a pastor's heart to the role of assisting our shepherd, Robert Cardinal McElroy, in loving and serving the faithful of the Archdiocese of Washington.

I worked closely with Bishop-Elect Boxie as Parochial Vicar of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Largo, MD, where I am pastor, for three years prior to his becoming chaplain to the Catholic student community at Howard University in Washington, DC. I saw Fr. Boxie easily learn and relate to the needs of people of the parish. He strove to become familiar with the cultural heritages of the diverse congregation of St. Joseph, with many parishioners hailing from America, the Caribbean and African nations. Fr. Boxie worked well with the youth of the parish, organizing events, both spiritual and recreational, while engaging them in living their faith. He has developed and led the Catholic student community at Howard University into a vibrant group that prays together, centering their love of their faith at the Sister Thea Bowman Catholic Student Center.

I have worked over the last several years with Bishop-Elect Studniewski around the Sacrament of Confirmation for the students of Blessed Sacrament parish, school, religious education program and the surrounding private Catholic schools. I have seen his pastoral care of these young parishioners and their families. Fr. Studniewski was always available for his parishioners. He is a priest that Blessed Sacrament parishioners know that they can turn to for guidance, care and questions.

Both Bishops-Elect Boxie and Studniewski will bring their pastoral gifts to their episcopal ministries to enrich the lives of God's people in the Archdiocese of Washington and help them prepare for the eternal life that our Lord calls to live in Him.

A true pastoral heart, care and dedication to the social concerns of all of God's people is what Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala will bring to the faithful of the diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, just as he has in leading the Secretariat for Evangelization and Synodal Renewal in the Archdiocese of Washington.

### ***Statement from Bishop Juan Esposito-Garcia, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington***

The appointment of Father Studniewski and Father Boxie as Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese of Washington is a recognition of their many impressive personal talents and priestly virtues. Their appointment is also a wonderful testament to our Holy Father's loving concern and solicitude for the People of God of the archdiocese under the dedicated and inspiring pastoral leadership of Cardinal McElroy.

I am immensely grateful for the blessing of the many years of Bishop Campbell's generous service and exemplary pastoral ministry to the People of God as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Washington. I am most grateful for his kindness, friendship and insightfulness.

The appointment by the Holy Father of Bishop Menjivar Ayala as the new shepherd to lead the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is a recognition of his many personal gifts and heartening pastoral zeal. His episcopal ministry will be an enormous blessing to the People of God now entrusted to his care.

### ***Statement from Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington***

The Archdiocese of Washington experiences a number of significant transitions today and we offer our genuine gratitude to Bishop Roy Campbell who begins his retirement. He has been a generous and effective bishop for us since 2017. He enjoys the well-deserved respect and admiration of the people of this local Church. Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala bestowed on us the many gifts of his cultural heritage and pastoral compassion which he will now take with him as the new Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Father Gary Studniewski has been called to the episcopacy as an Auxiliary Bishop of Washington where he will continue to serve us in the image of Christ the Good Shepherd. Father Robert Boxie will take up the episcopal ministry as our newest Auxiliary Bishop bringing his many talents, enthusiasm, and wisdom to this office. Our Archdiocese has been richly blessed by the ministry of these men both in our past and we are certain we will be in our future.

### ***Statement from Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington***

The news that our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV has appointed Father Gary Studniewski and Father Robert Boxie III as Auxiliary Bishops of Washington and Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala as the Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston and, at the same time, has accepted the resignation of Bishop Roy Campbell from his long and fruitful service as Auxiliary Bishop highlights their wonderful ministry, pastoral commitment and priestly dedication. I join all in congratulating them and asking God's continued blessings on them. These appointments underline the outstanding service and pastoral commitment of the priests of this great Archdiocese.

Both Bishop-elect Studniewski and Bishop-elect Boxie have demonstrated their commitment to the Church and their effective ministry which will now enrich this archdiocese by their services as Auxiliary Bishops.

It is a joy also to recognize the pastoral work of Bishop Menjivar-Ayala, who has carried out numerous ministries in this archdiocese, and now will become the Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston.

At the same time, the Holy Father's acceptance of the resignation of Bishop Roy Campbell presents an occasion to pay tribute to and thank him. He has provided this archdiocese and its faithful with extraordinary ministry and dedicated service first as a priest and then as an Auxiliary Bishop.

As I join all in offering them best wishes, I look forward with gratitude and pray that they may continue to serve God's Church with the love and devotion they bring to their ministry.

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*The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington is home to more than 655,000 Catholics, 140 parishes and 90 Catholic schools, located in Washington, D.C., and five Maryland counties: Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's and St. Mary's.*