



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

Remarks of Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

**on the appointment of Rev. Msgr. James D. Conley
as auxiliary bishop of Denver**

*April 10, 2008, 9 a.m., press conference
Cardinal Stafford Library, Denver, Colorado*

Good morning, and thanks for coming.

This is a day a lot of our people have prayed about for more than three years.

The Church in northern Colorado is so alive and so diverse that nobody can do her work without a lot of help. I could never do this ministry without the friendship of my vicar general, Msgr. Tom Fryar, my vicar for priests, Father Bernie Schmitz, my vicar for Hispanic ministry, Father Jorge de los Santos, my judicial vicar, Father James Moreno and all the priests of the archdiocese. I want to thank them again today for sharing so much of my work so unselfishly.

But some things really do need the presence of a bishop, and one man can't do them all. That's why Bishop José Gomez played such a vital and well-loved role in the life of our Church until he was called to be archbishop of San Antonio. And since then, our needs have only gotten bigger—which is why the news today is so important. For Catholics, every bishop is a successor of the apostles. That apostolic presence grounds and nourishes the local Church. An auxiliary bishop shares in the service of his bishop in a very special way. In effect, his presence is the archbishop's presence; his work is the archbishop's work.

Effective today, April 10, the Holy Father has granted my request for an auxiliary by appointing Msgr. James D. Conley as auxiliary bishop of Denver.

You have a bio of the bishop-elect in your press kits, and I hope you'll read it carefully ... because when you do, you'll see that we've been given an enormously gifted and experienced man as a bishop and a brother.

I'm not allowed to talk much about the details of what goes into choosing bishops—those decisions are made very carefully by the Holy Father himself and his advisers. But I can tell you that I've known and greatly admired the work of Bishop-elect Conley for a long time. In my contact with him over the years, I've been impressed by his intelligence, energy, balance, warmth and humor. He has a special gift for working with young adults and families. The many bishops and laypeople who know him are enthusiastic in their support for him. He has outstanding experience both as a well-loved pastor in Kansas and as an official serving the global Church with the Holy See. He'll be a brother to our priests and deacons, and a great servant to our people. In every sense, we couldn't be more blessed. And I'm grateful to God, to the Holy Father and to Bishop-elect Conley that today is finally possible.

When I came to Denver as the archbishop 11 years ago, I committed myself to being bishop of all the people—not just Native Americans, or Hispanics, or Anglos, or Asians, but all our Catholic people. When Bishop-elect Conley is ordained a bishop at the cathedral on May 30, he'll join in that ministry. This is a special day of joy for *all* our people, because all our people will come to know Bishop Conley as their brother, their friend, and their bishop.

In a few minutes we'll be taking questions, but now please join me in welcoming our new bishop-elect.

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