



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

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Pope Benedict appoints Msgr. James D. Conley auxiliary bishop of Denver Archdiocese

Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Reverend Monsignor James D. Conley as auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Denver. The Holy See made the announcement today at noontime in Rome.

Bishop-elect Conley, 53, is a native of Overland Park, Kan., a suburb of Kansas City, and a convert to Catholicism. Currently pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish in the Diocese of Wichita, Kan., he previously served the Holy Father for 10 years as an official in the Vatican Congregation for Bishops in Rome. He has been a Catholic for 33 years and a priest for 23 years.

Denver Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., will ordain the new auxiliary bishop during a Mass of Episcopal Ordination Friday, May 30, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at 1:30 p.m. in the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver.

“I am both honored and humbled to be named auxiliary bishop of Denver. I’ve heard that the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Denver is both young and dynamic, and is experiencing rapid growth,” said Bishop-elect Conley. “I look forward to assisting Archbishop Chaput in his pastoral ministry of serving the good people of northern

Colorado. I attended my first three years of elementary school in Arvada, and I still have fond memories of those days.”

As auxiliary bishop, Bishop-elect Conley will assist Archbishop Chaput in serving the sacramental, spiritual and pastoral needs of the half a million Catholics who reside in the territory of the Denver Archdiocese. The Denver Archdiocese has been without an auxiliary bishop since 2005 when the Most Reverend Jose H. Gomez was named archbishop of San Antonio, Texas.

“I’m grateful and very pleased for this appointment from the Holy See. Bishop-elect Conley has an extraordinary heart for the Church,” said Archbishop Chaput. “He proved his skills as a pastor in Kansas. Before that, he served the global Catholic community with distinction in Rome. He has a keen mind and a warm sense of humor. He’s done wonderful work with young adults, and as a convert himself, his energy and enthusiasm for the Catholic faith are infectious. He’s a tremendous gift to the Church here in Colorado.”

Bishop-elect Conley converted to the Catholic faith in 1975 during college at the University of Kansas. He entered the seminary five years later and was ordained a priest for the Wichita Diocese in 1985. He holds a master’s degree in divinity from Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., and a licentiate in moral theology from the Accademia Alfonsiana, a part of the Pontifical University of the Lateran in Rome. In addition to several parish assignments within the Wichita Diocese, he served as diocesan director of the Respect Life Office. While assigned to the Vatican Congregation for Bishops in Rome, he was chaplain of the University of Dallas Rome Campus, and adjunct instructor of theology for Christendom College Rome Campus. Pope John Paul II named him a “monsignor” in 2001.

“I love my parish of Blessed Sacrament in Wichita. I will miss the people of the parish, my brother priests and the people of the Diocese of Wichita,” said Bishop-elect Conley. “A priest, however, has to be ready and willing to serve when and where he is called, trusting that the Holy Spirit will give him the strength and courage to accept the will of

God with joy and peace. I ask the people of the Wichita Diocese for prayers as I make this transition.”

The Archdiocese of Denver has had four auxiliary bishops in its 118-year history: Bishop David M. Maloney, who served with Archbishop Vehr from 1961 to 1967; Bishop George Evans, who served with Archbishop James Casey from 1969 to 1985; Bishop Richard Hanifen, who served from 1974 until 1984 when he became bishop of Colorado Springs; and Bishop Jose H. Gomez, who served with Archbishop Chaput from 2001 until 2005 when he became archbishop of San Antonio.

An auxiliary bishop is appointed by the pope at the request of the diocesan bishop or archbishop to assist in pastoral care of the diocese. The word “auxiliary” comes from the Latin word “*auxilior*,” which means to help or assist.

The Archdiocese of Denver currently has 144 parishes that serve more than 500,000 Catholics in a geographic region that stretches across 25 counties in northern Colorado and has a total population of more than 3 million people.

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