



A Catholic Communications Corporation Site



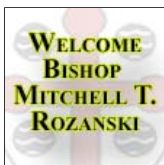
Friday June 20, 2014

[Regional News](#) / [National News](#) / [World News](#) / [Calendar of Events](#)

Enter Search...

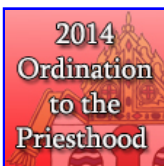
Submit

Jun 19, 2014



Top Story

Bishop McDonnell introduces new bishop: 'You're gonna love him'



Story and photos by Rebecca Drake

SPRINGFIELD – Pope Francis has officially named Auxiliary Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski of Baltimore, 55, as bishop of Springfield, Mass., and accepted

the resignation of Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell from pastoral governance of the diocese.

The announcements of the appointment and resignation were made June 19 in Washington, D.C., by Archbishop Carlo Viganò, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

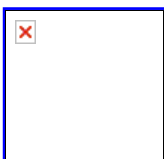
Staff, priests, deacons and members of local religious communities were introduced to Bishop Rozanski at a gathering this morning in the Bishop Marshall Center, here.

Shortly before the beginning of a formal press conference at 10 a.m., the now-Springfield Bishop Emeritus Timothy A. McDonnell told diocesan staff, clergy and professed religious, “The wait is finally over,” referring to the fact that he had submitted his resignation to the Vatican more than 18 months ago.

Bishop Rozanski, a Baltimore native, comes to the Springfield Diocese with 20 years of experience as a parish priest and 10 years’ experience as an auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. (See related article on ioobserve for more biographical information on Bishop Rozanski.)



Addressing the gathering at the Bishop Marshall Center, Bishop McDonnell noted that the Baltimore diocese was the first Catholic diocese established in the United States more than 200 years ago, covering a territory that stretched from the Canadian border to Florida. Since western Massachusetts was part of that first Catholic diocese, he said, “They are finally paying us a visit.”



[CONTACT](#)
[LEGAL](#)
[PRIVACY](#)

After formally introducing the new bishop, Bishop McDonnell said, “You’re gonna love him.”

Addressing Bishop Rozanski, he said, “You’ll have a great staff. You’ll have wonderful priests. You’ll have a great diocese.”

In a light moment, Bishop McDonnell, a New York native and Yankees baseball fan, presented Bishop Rozanski, a Baltimore Orioles fan, with a Boston Red Sox mug, saying, “It’s never been used!”

Bishop Rozanski’s first words to the diocesan gathering were expressions of gratitude to Pope Frances, Archbishop Viganò, and Bishop McDonnell. Bishop Rozanski described the warm welcome he received from Bishop McDonnell at Bradley International Airport in Hartford, Conn., and the detailed description Bishop McDonnell provided of the landmarks, the history and especially the people of the Springfield Diocese.

“I can see how much he loves you,” said Bishop Rozanski of his predecessor. “I pray and I know that I will grow in that same love with God’s grace.”



Speaking to the media at the beginning of the press conference, Bishop Rozanski again expressed his gratitude to Bishop McDonnell, his gratefulness for his priestly vocation and his willingness to serve in his new assignment as bishop of Springfield.

“In faith we believe it is the will of God,” Bishop Rozanski said. “I ask God to continue to unite us... to be people who truly live the Gospel and the will of God.”

Asked by a reporter what he most wants parishioners in the Springfield Diocese to know about him, Bishop Rozanski said he “felt a call to priesthood very early in life” and that “the gift of family, the gift of faith and the gift of priesthood have been central to my life.”

He again praised Bishop McDonnell and “his love for the people of the diocese.”

Responding to a question about ministering to the growing Hispanic Catholic community in western Massachusetts, Bishop Rozanski noted that the church has historically welcomed immigrants and refugees, saying, “As a church, Jesus gives us the model and the example of welcome.”

He also responded to a question about increasing enrollment in Catholic schools, saying, “We have to be creative... We have to keep them affordable and we have to continue to bring the Gospel message.”

Asked if he would speak about his family and the move from Baltimore to New England, Bishop Rozanski said his parents, who live in East Baltimore, and his two younger brothers and their families “have always been very supportive of me in my priestly ministry” and in spite of the distance, he expects the relationships to remain strong.

As reporters crowded around the new bishop for individual interviews, iobserve spoke to Father Jonathan Reardon, a diocesan priest stationed at the Newman Catholic Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Father Reardon expressed his thanks for the service of Bishop McDonnell and said he is looking forward to the leadership of Bishop Rozanski.

“I like how he said, ‘My plan is the Gospel,’” said Father Reardon, because, as a church, “that’s our plan.”

Sister Judith O’Connell, the Springfield Diocese’s vicar for religious, was present at the diocesan gathering and the press conference. She told iobserve she believes Bishop Rozanski’s experience in

the Baltimore Archdiocese will be valuable. She also said she appreciates the new bishop's pastoral experience and perspective.

"He has that rich pastoral experience and approach, and the spirit of Pope Francis," Sister O'Connell said.

Father Gary M. Daily, vocations director for the Springfield Diocese, also commented on the benefits of the new bishop's experience and background. "This is a great appointment by Pope Francis. (Bishop Rozanski) comes here fresh ... and open-minded."



"He has done great work as a priest," Father Dailey said. "He will be a tremendous gift to the diocese."

Deacon James Conroy, who serves at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in West Springfield, said of the new bishop, "I'm very optimistic, very enthusiastic. He seems to be a people person."

Deacon Conroy said the announcement of the new bishop also brings mixed feelings, as Bishop McDonnell is now retiring.



"I am feeling the loss of a spiritual father, but also know that we are getting another," the deacon said. "(Bishop McDonnell) deserves many thanks for the tough decisions he had to make."

The new bishop is scheduled to be installed on Aug. 12.

A special segment on the Springfield Diocese's new bishop will air on the June 21 edition of the Springfield Diocese's weekly newsmagazine, "Real to Reel," which airs Saturday evening at 7 on WWLP-22NEWS.

[Return](#)

_CATHOLIC COMMUNICATIONS CORP., 65 ELLIOT ST., P.O. BOX 1730 SPRINGFIELD, MA 01102-1730

413-732-3175 / web@diospringfield.org

© Copyright 2014 [Catholic Communications Corporation](#)
This site is powered by [CMS Made Simple](#) version 1.11.6