



Most Rev. Robert J. Cunningham

Bishop-elect

Diocese of Syracuse

Bishop Robert J. Cunningham, son the late Cecil and Grace Cunningham, was born and raised in Buffalo, New York. He received his early education at St. John the Baptist Parish Elementary School and the Diocesan Preparatory Seminary, Buffalo. His college and seminary education continued at St. John Vianney Seminary, East Aurora, where he earned both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Divinity degrees. In 1978 he received a Licentiate Degree in Canon Law from the Catholic University of America.

Bishop Cunningham was ordained to the priesthood by Auxiliary Bishop Bernard J. McLaughlin on May 24, 1969 at St. Joseph New Cathedral in Buffalo. His first assignment was associate pastor at Blessed Sacrament Parish, Kenmore. In 1972 he became the assistant pastor at his home parish of St. John the Baptist, Kenmore.

He was named secretary to Bishop Edward D. Head and assistant chancellor of the Diocese of Buffalo in 1974. Upon the completion of his Licentiate Degree in Canon Law, Bishop Cunningham was named a judge in the marriage tribunal and vice-chancellor of the diocese. He was named a Monsignor by John Paul II in 1984. In 1985 he was appointed chancellor for the diocese and the following year, vicar general. In January 2002, Bishop

Henry J. Mansell named Bishop Cunningham pastor of St. Louis Church in downtown Buffalo. In December of 2003, the diocesan College of Consultors in Buffalo elected him diocesan administrator, a position he held until his installation as the Bishop of Ogdensburg.

On March 9, 2004 His Holiness Pope John Paul II appointed Msgr. Robert J. Cunningham as the 13th Bishop of Ogdensburg. Bishop Cunningham was ordained and installed as the Bishop of Ogdensburg on May 18, 2004 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. The Diocese has over 128,000 Catholics in the eight northernmost counties of New York State covering an area of 12,036 square miles.

On April 21, 2009 His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI appointed Bishop Cunningham as the 10th Bishop of the Diocese of Syracuse. He will be installed as the Bishop of Syracuse on May 26, 2009 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Syracuse. The Diocese of Syracuse has over 285,000 Catholics in seven counties of Upstate New York. The Diocese of Syracuse was established November 26, 1886 and covers 5,749 square miles.

Bishop Cunningham has served on a number of boards including Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Buffalo, Baker Victory Services in Lackawanna, NY, the Cantalician Center in Buffalo and the board of trustees of the former Wadhams Hall Seminary College in Ogdensburg. The Bishop was also a charter member of the Kenmore Mercy Hospital Foundation Board.

Currently Bishop Cunningham serves on the board of trustees of Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, NY. He is president of the Board of Managers of St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg and the Board of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

In the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop Cunningham has served as Chairman of Region II (Province of New York). He currently serves as a representative from Region II to the Administrative Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He also serves on the Committee for Priorities and Plans, as well as on the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Sub-committee on Native American Catholics.

Bishop Cunningham was presented with an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Niagara University, Niagara Falls in 1991 and St. John's University, Staten Island in 2007. The Kenmore Mercy Hospital Foundation

Board honored him for his years of service on the foundation board with the Sister Mechtilde Award in 2004. In 2008, Bishop Cunningham received the Cure of Ars Award from Christ the King Seminary.

Bishop Cunningham has a brother and sister-in-law, Patrick J. and Sheila Cunningham, Williamsville, NY, and a sister and brother-in-law, Eileen and Dr. Ronald G. Korn, Clarence, NY. He has thirteen nieces and nephews and twenty-eight grand nieces and grand nephews.