

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
400 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503

570-207-2219

www.dioceseofscranton.org

August 31, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diocese of Scranton Enters Transition in Governance

Bishop Martino resigns for health reasons

Pope accepts Auxiliary Bishop Dougherty's retirement

Cardinal Rigali to serve as Apostolic Administrator until new Bishop is named

A major transition in the governance of the Diocese of Scranton began on Monday, Aug. 31 with the resignation of Bishop Joseph F. Martino for health reasons.

Pope Benedict XVI has accepted Bishop Martino's request to resign and named him Retired Bishop of Scranton.

The Holy Father has appointed Cardinal Justin F. Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia, to serve as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton until a new Bishop of Scranton is named.

The pope has also accepted the retirement of Auxiliary Bishop John M. Dougherty, who has been serving as Vicar General, moderator of the Curia and Vicar for Administration.

These changes were announced by Cardinal Rigali at a news conference on Aug. 31 at the Guild building in Scranton. The news conference was broadcast live by Catholic Television: CTV. A video of the event is now available for viewing on the Diocesan website at www.dioceseofscranton.org.

Bishop Martino, who turned 63 in May, was Bishop of Scranton for the past six years. He articulated the reasons for his resignation in a prepared statement.

He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 1970 and served in several parishes. In 1996, the late Pope John Paul II named him an Auxiliary Bishop.

Bishop Martino served as director of the Philadelphia archdiocesan Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs from 1997 until 2003, and earlier, from 1990 to 1993. He also served as the archdiocesan director of the Office for Renewal of Pastoral Life, from 1992 to 1997. In addition, he served on the faculty of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, as Dean of Formation in the Theology Division and assistant professor of Church History from 1986 to 1992. He was a faculty member of Bishop Shanahan High School, West Chester, from 1982-1984.

From 1984 to 1986, he conducted a special research assignment for the Archdiocese, authorizing the official Church document pleading the beatification cause of Mother Katherine Drexel, founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She was beatified in 1988 and proclaimed a saint by the pope in 2000.

He was appointed the ninth Bishop of Scranton by Pope John Paul II on July 25, 2003, and was installed on Oct. 1, 2003, in St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton.

Bishop Martino has held many national committee memberships. Most recently, on Aug. 27, the Archbishop Fulton John Sheen Foundation announced that Bishop Martino has joined the Episcopal Advisory Board for the Cause for Beatification of the Servant of God Archbishop Fulton J Sheen.

As Apostolic Administrator, Cardinal Justin F. Rigali will exercise the pastoral care of the Diocese of Scranton temporarily until a new Bishop of Scranton is named.

For the past six years he has served as the twelfth Bishop and eighth Archbishop of Philadelphia. He was appointed by Pope John Paul II on July 15, 2003. He was named a Cardinal on September 28, 2003. On October 7, 2003, he was installed Archbishop of Philadelphia by Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, the Apostolic Nuncio, in the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul.

Cardinal Rigali is the spiritual leader of almost 1.5 million Catholics in the City of Philadelphia and the surrounding counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery. He is also a successor of Saint John Nepomucene Neumann, the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia (1852-1860) and the first canonized male American saint.

Two weeks after his installation as Archbishop of Philadelphia, he was formally created a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II in the Public Consistory in Saint Peter's Square on October 21, 2003.

Pope Benedict XVI appointed Cardinal Rigali a member of the Vatican Congregation for Bishops on September 26, 2007. He is also a member of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments and a member of the Congregation's Vox Clara Committee. In addition, he is a member of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Holy See.

Currently, Cardinal Rigali is the Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee for Pro-Life Activities and is the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Aid to the Catholic Church in Central and Eastern Europe. He is a member of the Committee on the Liturgy, the Committee on the Relationship Between the Eastern and Latin Catholic Churches, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Scripture Translations and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Black and Indian Mission Office.

He was elected by the United States bishops in 2006 to serve as the national delegate to the Plenary Assembly of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress, and in 2005 as a delegate to the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which celebrated the theme "The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church."

The Cardinal is on the Board of Trustees of The Catholic University of America. At the same time he is Chair of the University Seminary Committee and member of the Administrative Committee. He is also on the Board of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. and the Chair of the Iconography Committee.

He is a member of the Order of the Knights of Malta and the Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. Cardinal Rigali is also a member of the Papal Foundation. On June 5, 2004 he became a Knight of Peter Claver. The Cardinal is also a member of the Board of Directors of the National Catholic Bioethics Center and is Episcopal Advisor to Serra International.

A Los Angeles native, he was ordained a priest by Cardinal James Francis McIntyre in the Cathedral of St. Vibiana in Los Angeles on April 25, 1961.

In October 1961, he entered the graduate division of the North American College in Rome and began graduate studies in canon law at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He obtained a doctorate in Canon Law from that university in 1964. From 1964 to 1966, he followed the course of studies at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy while serving in the English-language section of the Secretariat of State of the Vatican.

From September 1966 to February 1970, he served at the Apostolic Nunciature in Madagascar, which also was the Apostolic Delegation for the islands of Mauritius and La Reunión. During this time in July 1967, he was named a Papal Chamberlain (Monsignor) to His Holiness Pope Paul VI.

In February 1970, Monsignor Rigali became the director of the English-language section of the Vatican Secretariat of State, and the English-language translator for Pope Paul VI, whom he accompanied to various countries. Monsignor Rigali served as a professor at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome from 1972 to 1973.

During his service at the Vatican Secretariat of State, he also accompanied Pope John Paul II on a number of international pastoral visits, including the Holy Father's first two major journeys to the United States in 1979 and 1987. The 1979 trip included a visit to Philadelphia. On April 19, 1980 he was named a Prelate of Honor of His Holiness. He became a magistral chaplain in the Knights of Malta on October 25, 1984. On October 13, 1986, he became a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.

On June 8, 1985, he was named President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy and Titular Archbishop of Bolsena. Pope John Paul II ordained him to the episcopacy on September 14, 1985 in the Cathedral of Albano.

From 1985 to 1990, in addition to being President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy, he held a number of positions at the Vatican, serving the Secretariat of State, the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church, the Congregation for Bishops and the Pontifical Council for the Laity. On December 21, 1989, he was named Secretary of the Congregation for Bishops and on January 2, 1990 he became the Secretary of the College of Cardinals.

He was a member of the Permanent Interdicasterial Commission and served as a consultant to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. During the same time, he was also engaged in pastoral services to a number of parishes and seminaries in Rome.

On January 25, 1994, Pope John Paul II appointed him the eighth Bishop and seventh Archbishop of St. Louis. He was formally installed on March 15, 1994 by His Eminence Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops. He received the Pallium from the Holy Father on June 29, 1994. That same year, on November 7, he became a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Cardinal Rigali was elected by the United States bishops as a delegate to the Special Assembly for America of the Synod of Bishops of 1997. In January 1999, he hosted the Pastoral Visit of Pope John Paul II to the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the only such visit to a single diocese in the United States during the pontificate.

Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Rigali to the Tenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2001, the theme of which was "The Bishop, Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Hope of the World."

Pope Benedict's acceptance of Auxiliary Bishop John M. Dougherty's retirement marks another milestone in the life of a priest who has served the Diocese of Scranton for 52 years.

Since his ordination to the priesthood in June 1957, Bishop Dougherty has held various pastoral and teaching assignments as well as principal administrative positions within the Diocese.

They include service as assistant pastor of St. Ann's Church, Tobyhanna, professor of ascetical theology at St. Pius X Seminary, Dalton, and director of the diocesan office of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith under the late Bishop Jerome D. Hannan; Vicar for Religious, assistant chancellor, and chancellor by appointment of the late Bishop J. Carroll McCormick; and vicar general, moderator of the Curia, diocesan consultor and pastor of the parish community of the churches of St. Patrick, Holy Cross,

St. John the Baptist and Immaculate Heart of Mary in West Scranton, during the tenure of Bishop Timlin.

Pope John Paul II named Bishop Dougherty as Auxiliary Bishop of Scranton in February 1995, and he was ordained a Bishop the following month. He was appointed rector of Villa Saint Joseph, Dunmore, the retirement facility for diocesan priests, in June 1995, where he had maintained residence.

In 2004, Bishop Martino gave him significant additional collaborative responsibility in the daily administration of the Diocese by naming him Vicar for Administration, a newly-created central administrative post.

Bishop Dougherty, a native of Scranton, had long served the Diocese in key posts under four ordinaries. He held the title of diocesan Vicar General, another high-ranking administrative position in which he assisted Bishop Martino with the governance of the Diocese.

He was first appointed to this post in June 1984 by Bishop Emeritus James C. Timlin, Bishop Martino's immediate predecessor, and re-appointed to that position following Bishop Martino's installation as the ninth bishop of Scranton on Oct. 1, 2003.

In addition, Bishop Dougherty also served as moderator of the Curia, with oversight for the central diocesan administrative offices.

Bishop Dougherty, now 77, had submitted his retirement letter to Pope Benedict two years ago, as required by Church law.

Statement of Bishop Joseph F. Martino August 31, 2009

May Jesus Christ be praised!

Good Morning!

As you know, just over six years ago, on July 25, 2003, I was named the ninth Bishop of Scranton. My heart was filled with gratitude to Almighty God and Pope John Paul II for entrusting me with a flock to lead and accompany into greater holiness and mission. At the time of my installation as Bishop of Scranton on October 1, 2003, I cited the example of the late John Cardinal O'Hara, C.S.C., Archbishop of Philadelphia from 1952 until 1960. At Cardinal O'Hara's installation Mass, he stated that he had no program to announce. He simply asked people to tell him their needs and to rely on him to do his best to meet those needs. In this way, the Cardinal said, "Together, we will save our souls."

As I became more informed about the needs of the Diocese of Scranton throughout 2004, it became clear to me that, at the very least, something had to be done to halt the rapid financial deterioration of our Diocese. This situation had been caused by very high institutional expenses due to an excessive number of schools and parishes competing with one another and diluting Diocesan and parish resources. Even greater than the financial challenge of the Diocese was the fact that with so many schools and parishes, the clergy of the Diocese was not assigned in a strategic manner, with a view to leading a vigorous and successful New Evangelization of the Diocese, so dear to us all.

For some time now, there has not been a clear consensus among the clergy and people of the Diocese of Scranton regarding my pastoral initiatives or my way of governance. This development has caused me great sorrow, resulting in bouts of insomnia and at times a crippling physical fatigue.

The Diocese of Scranton needs to continue to respond to the call of our late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, and of his successor, Pope Benedict XVI, to engage in the New Evangelization. To do so, however, the Diocese of Scranton requires a Bishop who is at least physically vigorous. I am not that Bishop.

Therefore, I have asked our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, to accept my resignation as Bishop of Scranton. Today, it is being announced that the Holy Father has accepted my resignation and that he has named me the Retired Bishop of Scranton. I am deeply grateful to our Holy Father for his paternal compassion for me and, more importantly, for his pastoral zeal for the clergy and people of the Diocese of Scranton. While I have no immediate plans, I hope to be helpful and I will be residing for the most part in the Diocese of Scranton, specifically at the Fatima Center in Dalton, PA, when I am not visiting relatives and friends in Philadelphia.

At this time, I can also announce that the Holy Father has accepted the resignation from the office of Auxiliary Bishop of Scranton presented by Bishop John M. Dougherty, my right hand for the last six years. I am grateful that Pope Benedict XVI permitted Bishop Dougherty to stay on as Auxiliary Bishop, even though he had passed the age limit over two years ago, in order to assist me in the challenging task of governing pastorally the Diocese of Scranton. I have no words to describe the depth of my gratitude to Bishop Dougherty.

I also announce now that until a new Bishop of Scranton is chosen, Pope Benedict XVI has named His Eminence, Justin Cardinal Rigali, as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton. I wish to express to His Eminence my prayerful wishes that he have a fruitful apostolate among us all as our temporary Shepherd. The Cardinal will add responsibility for the almost 350,000 Catholics of the Diocese of Scranton to his current care for the almost million and a half Catholics of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This will be a great challenge for him, and I call on everyone in our Diocese to rally around the Cardinal and give him not only our cooperation but our hearts.

Finally, I thank everyone in the Diocese of Scranton who has collaborated with me, and as is customary on an occasion like this one, I seek forgiveness from anyone whom I may not have served adequately as Bishop, due to my human limitations. I invoke the prayers of Mary and all the saints and I close with these words from St. Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians:

“Now may God himself, our Father, and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you, so as to strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones. Amen”

And may Jesus Christ always be praised!

Cardinal Justin F. Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia
PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS
Diocese of Scranton
August 31, 2009

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you on this occasion.

With the resignation of Bishop Martino as Bishop of Scranton, I have been appointed by Pope Benedict XVI as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese. This appointment is by its nature temporary.

As the Apostolic Administrator I would like to open my remarks by offering Bishop Martino the expression of deep gratitude for all his pastoral service to the People of God in the Diocese of Scranton. The life of a bishop finds him intimately bound to the People of God who make up the Diocese that he is called to serve. Bishop Martino's resignation comes after much prayer and reflection. His decision also carries with it a deep concern for the well-being of this local Church, with its clergy, religious and laity. How will they best be served in their journey of faith? I am certain that such thoughts emerged in the Bishop's heart as he struggled with his own health issues and the needs of his people.

Bishop Martino has served the Diocese of Scranton for the past six years. He has faced many challenges during this time. Yet, undoubtedly, his greatest legacy to the Diocese of Scranton is and will be his invitation to the faithful to enter into a deeper relationship with God through prayer, and in particular through a renewed devotion to the presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. This remains a blessing for all.

Bishop Martino, thank you. May God bless you for your efforts and keep you in his care.

I would also like to express gratitude to Bishop Dougherty, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton for the past fourteen years and a priest of the Diocese for over 52 years. His contributions to the administrative work of this diocese are innumerable and span many decades. His ministry as a pastor and as a bishop has touched the lives of countless numbers of people throughout the Diocese of Scranton and beyond.

Bishop Dougherty, thank you. May God bless you in the years ahead.

I wish likewise to acknowledge the presence of Bishop Timlin, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Scranton. He too has served the Diocese well both during his time as Bishop and in the years that have followed. Thank you, Bishop Timlin.

On my part I am grateful to the Holy See for this temporary assignment as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton. It is an honor for me to serve during this time of transition as we await the appointment of a new Bishop. As Apostolic Administrator I am blessed now to have a special spiritual relationship with this local Church.

Understandably, given my responsibilities in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and elsewhere, it will be difficult for me to be personally present to you as much as I would like to be. For this reason I have asked Monsignor Joseph Bambara to serve during this time of transition as my Delegate with all the faculties of a Vicar General. Many of you know Monsignor Bambara. He is currently pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Mary of Czestochowa Parishes in Archbald. He brings a wealth of experience to this task, both administratively and pastorally. He will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Diocese and be my link to the Diocese in my absence. He will be collaborating very closely with me as the Church of Scranton moves forward.

I am grateful to Monsignor Vincent Grimalia and Father Joseph Kopacz who have served as Bishop Martino's Vicars General. I am also grateful to the many priests who served as Bishop Martino's Episcopal Vicars.

To assist in the work of the Diocese during my time with you, I am announcing the following appointments in addition to my appointment of Monsignor Bambara as my Delegate, as already mentioned.

- Monsignor Vincent Grimalia is appointed to serve as full-time director of the *Called to Mission and Holiness* program. It is my understanding that the people of the Diocese of Scranton have invested a great deal of time and effort into this process of parish restructuring and renewal. While I am aware of the fact that the process at times has been difficult, I also know that your efforts will help to maintain a vibrant Catholic presence in the eleven counties of the Diocese of Scranton for years to come. I am asking Monsignor Grimalia now to devote even more of his time to help with the many details of the implementation process, which he has done so well, and future pastoral planning. In addition I am asking him to continue to serve as Director of Continuing Education for Priests pro tem.
- Father Richard Loch is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for Priests pro tem.
- Father Philip Altavilla is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for the Northern Region of the Diocese pro tem.
- Father Mark Balczeniuk is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for the Eastern Region of the Diocese pro tem.
- Father John Polednak is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for the Southern Region of the Diocese pro tem.
- Monsignor Neil Van Loon is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for the Western Region of the Diocese pro tem.
- Monsignor Joseph Kelly is appointed as Episcopal Vicar for Hispanic Ministry pro tem.
- Father Anthony Generose, while remaining Judicial Vicar, is appointed Vicar for Consecrated Life pro tem.

My friends, as you know so well, the Diocese of Scranton is richly blessed. It is blessed first of all with a people of vibrant faith: our clergy, religious and laity. In that faith and openness to Christ we find our hope.

The Diocese of Scranton is blessed with good and faithful priests who do the work of the Church, even as they face various difficulties and challenges, including changing parish structures.

The Diocese is blessed with parishes in which the faith of the People of God has been celebrated and lived for many years; communities that serve the needs of so many, that offer healing and compassion, and that seek to build up the Kingdom of God in our midst.

The Diocese is blessed with the presence of four respected Catholic Universities as well as with wonderful Catholic schools and religious education programs in which our faith is taught and nurtured.

And the Diocese of Scranton is blessed indeed by the tapestry of people who make up the Church of these eleven counties. We are blessed by the presence of old and new immigrants in our parishes and neighborhoods who invite us to celebrate with them their heritage, their lives and their faith.

Change and transition are always challenging to embrace. Yet, we know that life goes on. In the Church, life always goes on with joyful anticipation of the future because the Risen Christ journeys with us. And life will go on here in the Diocese of Scranton with apostolic succession and the continuity of Catholic faith.

May we use this time of transition as a period of prayer and expectation. I invite you to work together in pursuing charity in truth. As a Diocese we look to Mary, the Mother of God, for consolation and help.

Finally, I would say that so much of the meaning of Christianity is captured in the words of Saint Paul: "Bear one another's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" (*Gal 6:2*).

Thank you and God bless you.