

Statement from Bishop-elect Mark Seitz

Allow me to begin by expressing to the Holy Father, Pope Benedict the XVI, my gratitude for the confidence he has placed in me by virtue of this appointment.

When Bishop Farrell informed me that I was chosen to be an auxiliary bishop he prefaced it by saying that he was about to turn my life upside down. He certainly spoke the truth. From my earliest memories I have felt drawn to the priesthood. Nothing seemed like it could compare to the chance to give my life to God in this way and to serve people by offering them the greatest of His gifts. Maybe it was a result of growing up as the eldest of ten. Parish communities felt like home to me, like family.

After high school in Wisconsin, where I was born, I found myself here in Irving at Holy Trinity Seminary. When it came time to make a decision as to which diocese I would commit to serve, I realized I had fallen in love with the Diocese of Dallas, a small young church, that was growing rapidly and that had imbibed the same never-say-never, can-do spirit you will find all through north Texas.

In these past nearly 30 years of priestly ministry I never had a doubt that I was called to parish ministry. For all of its daily challenges and trials this service has brought me great joy.

But God is the Lord of my life. I have learned through the years that following Christ is an adventure filled with totally unexpected dips and turns. When you give your life to His service you better learn to enjoy the ride.

So now, as the Bishop predicted, I am upside down. I trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in this shocking decision of the Holy Father. I want to assure His Holiness and my Ordinary, Bishop Farrell that I will serve with all that is in me.

My parents and family began my formation and the parish communities where I have had the privilege to serve have continued it. You have all enriched my life.

I would like to thank my brother priests, who have been true brothers to me, offering me your inspiring example, your support and your friendship. One of my hopes for this new Episcopal ministry is that I might serve and support you.

I would like to say a few words to the Spanish speaking community in the Diocese:

No soy de origen latino, pero a lo largo de mis años de ministerio sacerdotal, he tenido la oportunidad de trabajar con la comunidad hispana aquí en la diócesis, en México y en Honduras.

Gracias a estas experiencias he aprendido mucho—poco a poco me ha enamorado de la comunidad latina, me encanta la cultura, la fe y también, la salsa picante. Quiero servir a la comunidad y pido una oración de todos ustedes.

In closing I simply would beg your prayers just as I pleaded for the Holy Father's prayers in my acceptance letter. Pray that God, who has begun this good work in me, will bring it to fulfillment.