



## **DIOCESE OF GAYLORD**

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### **STATEMENT OF BISHOP STEVEN J. RAICA REGARDING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP HEBDA AS ARCHBISHOP OF ST PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS**

It is true that God continues to surprise us in wonderful ways! This morning I learned that Archbishop Bernard Hebda, the fourth bishop of Gaylord, and up to now serving as coadjutor Archbishop of Newark and Administrator of the Archdiocese of St Paul-Minneapolis, was formally named the Archbishop of St Paul-Minneapolis by our Holy Father, Pope Francis. It is a rare occurrence (but not impossible!) that a coadjutor bishop for one diocese is transferred to another.

On behalf of the entire Diocese of Gaylord, I am happy to extend our hearty congratulations and best wishes to Archbishop Hebda. Over the years I have known Archbishop Hebda as a friend, mentor and colleague. I have appreciated his keen and thoughtful insights in our conversations. His affable nature is remembered by many throughout our 21 counties of northern Lower Michigan. Many parishioners, religious, priests, deacons and lay ministers throughout the diocese speak of him to me as a friend and fellow traveler on the journey of faith. He was approachable, someone who listened to their concerns. Above all, many know Archbishop Hebda as a man of faith and a churchman, dedicated to the mission of Christ. For these reasons, I am confident that the ministry of Archbishop Hebda to announce the Gospel of Christ will continue to be very fruitful.

Again surprisingly, this announcement is made on Holy Thursday, the day in which we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist and priesthood at the Mass of the Lord's Supper. We are reminded at that Liturgy during the special rite of Washing of Feet that Jesus came as one who served. I believe that our Holy Father had this in mind when the announcement was made. Archbishop Hebda's motto, "Only Jesus" is a fitting reminder of the focus of his episcopal ministry – as one who serves.

My prayers and those of the people of God in the Diocese of Gaylord accompany Archbishop Hebda on his new episcopal mission!