



Diocese of Belleville
Office of the Apostolic Administrator

May 18, 2020

BISHOP-ELECT MCGOVERN TO BE ORDAINED ON JULY 22

The Diocese of Belleville happily announces that Wednesday, July 22, 2020, in the Cathedral of St. Peter, will be the date and place for the Ordination and Installation of Bishop-Elect Michael G. McGovern as the Ninth Bishop of Belleville. The Ordination Liturgy will begin at 2:00 pm CST. Cardinal Blase Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, will be the principal consecrator. Bishop George J. Rassas, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Chicago and Bishop Edward K. Braxton, who will become Bishop Emeritus of Belleville, will serve as co-consecrators.

Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, has confirmed that he will participate in the ordination liturgy. Archbishop Pierre, who serves as the representative of Pope Francis to the United States, will read the papal bull or letter from Pope Francis appointing Bishop-Elect McGovern to the Diocese of Belleville.

Bishop Braxton, who has served as Bishop of Belleville since 2005, encouraged the faithful to pray for their new shepherd in the weeks leading up to the ordination: "Pray that Bishop-Elect McGovern will continue to strive to be conformed to the image of Christ Himself, and offer a constant witness of faith, hope, and love as he helps you to learn your faith, love your faith and live your faith." (See the Bishop's complete statement below.)

Bishop-Elect McGovern also asked for prayers in anticipation of his installation as the Ninth Bishop of Belleville: "I am very grateful to the many people who have contacted me and assured me of their prayers and support. I am eager to arrive in Belleville and begin serving as a shepherd to this local Church. Please continue to pray for me."

Due to concern for the health and safety of the public in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, attendance at the ordination liturgy will be limited and social distancing protocols will be in place. The Diocese of Belleville is exploring options for broadcasting the liturgy. This will allow the faithful to prayerfully participate in the ordination in their homes.

July 22nd is the day on which the Church honors St. Mary Magdalene, a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. According to the gospels, St. Mary Magdalene, who was at the foot of the cross, was the first disciple to experience an apparition of the Risen Christ on Easter morning and shared the good news of His Resurrection with the apostles and disciples. Bishop-Elect McGovern stated: "I am glad that the ordination is taking place on the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene. As I begin my ministry as a bishop, St. Mary Magdalene is a wonderful role model for all of us, both women and men, in joyfully announcing the presence of the Risen Christ in our world."

Bishop Braxton's Statement:

“Dear Sisters and Brothers in Jesus Christ,

As we approach the date of the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop-Elect Michael G. Mc Govern, I invite you to join with me in praying for him. Even though the coronavirus pandemic prevents us from gathering together to pray for him at daily and Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist, let us pray to the Holy Spirit for him fervently and often. Priests and Deacons can pray for him in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament during the Liturgy of the Hours. Families can pray the Rosary together for him. Petitions for the fruitfulness of his ministry should be included in the Universal Prayers during live streaming of the Mass. Pray that the Holy Spirit will enkindle in him the fire of divine love needed to lead and guide the holy People of God. Pray that he may continue to strive to be confirmed to the image of Christ Himself and offer a constant witness of faith, hope, and love as he helps you to learn your faith, love your faith and live your faith.

May the Lord who begins this new work in him bring it to fulfilment!”

The Most Reverend Edward K. Braxton, Ph.D., S.T.D.
Apostolic Administrator
Diocese of Belleville