



DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Office of Communications

Catholic Center • 11625 Old St. Augustine Road • Jacksonville, Florida • 32258
Phone: (904) 262.3200 • Fax: (904) 262.2398 • www.dosafl.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Kathleen Bagg
Email: kbagg@dosafl.com
(904) 262-1705/office
(904) 434-3909/cell

Father Erik Pohlmeier of Little Rock Appointed Bishop of St. Augustine

Jacksonville, Fla. – The Vatican announced today that Pope Francis has appointed Father Erik Pohlmeier the next bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine. For the past 24 years, Bishop-elect Pohlmeier has served as a pastor in the Diocese of Little Rock, which encompasses the entire state of Arkansas.

Raised in Paris, Ark., Father Pohlmeier was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Little Rock on July 25, 1998. He currently serves as pastor of the largest parish in Little Rock, Christ the King, and director of the Faith Formation and Deacon Formation offices. He has been the theological consultant for the *Arkansas Catholic* newspaper for 19 years and director of continuing education of clergy since 2019.

In his new appointment, Father Pohlmeier succeeds Bishop Felipe J. Estévez, who has served the St. Augustine Diocese for the past 11 years and is retiring at the age of 76. He will be installed as the 11th bishop of St. Augustine on Friday, July 22 with Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami presiding at the ordination liturgy. Bishop Anthony B. Taylor of Little Rock and Bishop Estévez will be co-consecrators. Details of the ordination have not been announced.

One of seven Catholic dioceses in Florida, the Mother Diocese of Florida has a Catholic population of more than 153,000 in 17 counties in northeast and north central Florida. This compares to the approximately 154,000 Catholics in Arkansas' 75 counties.

Reflecting on his appointment to the Diocese of St. Augustine, Father Pohlmeier said, "I am grateful for every way I have been called to serve the Church and am humbled by this opportunity to serve in the place where Mass was first celebrated in the United States. May God be praised for any good work I am able to do."

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Bishop Taylor shared, “Bishop-elect Pohlmeier is one of the most capable, beloved, and admired priests of the Diocese of Little Rock, and he will be sorely missed. He is fluent in Spanish and brings to the Diocese of St. Augustine a personal experience of the full spectrum of Catholic life acquired over the course of 24 years of priestly ministry in every apostolate imaginable: urban, rural and suburban in which he has served people of every ethnicity, income level and culture, both in parish life and in diocesan apostolates, most recently as the director of faith formation.

We are all one Church, so while we in Arkansas are proud of Bishop-elect Pohlmeier and sending him to Florida will be a great sacrifice for us, we rejoice in the good fortune of the Diocese of St. Augustine and know that the Lord must love them very much to give them such a fine man to be their next bishop.”

A news conference to introduce Bishop-elect Pohlmeier will be held today (May 24) at 10 a.m. at the Catholic Center, 11625 Old St. Augustine Road in Jacksonville. The community can view the news conference on Facebook Live at 10 a.m. (www.Facebook.com/DOSACatholics)

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