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# DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

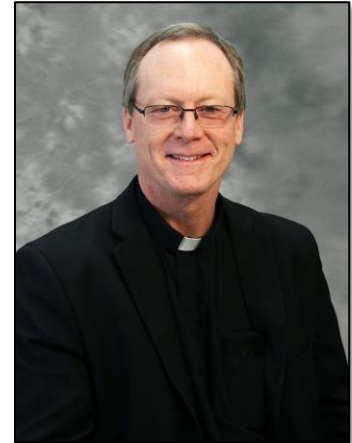
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## **Pope Francis Names Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh as Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord**

For Immediate Release | December 21, 2021

GAYLORD, MICHIGAN — His Holiness Pope Francis has named the Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh, priest of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord. The announcement was made today by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, in Washington, D.C.

Bishop-elect Walsh, 56, is a priest of the Diocese of Scranton and currently serves as pastor of Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Carbondale, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Carbondale. Bishop-elect Walsh's episcopal ordination and installation as sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord has been set for March 4, 2022, at 2 p.m. in St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord.



As sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, Bishop-elect Walsh succeeds the Most Reverend Steven J. Raica, J.C.D., D.D. Bishop Raica served as shepherd of the diocese from August 28, 2014 until June 23, 2020, at which time he was installed as bishop of the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama. Since June 2020, while the diocese was a vacant see, Bishop Walter A. Hurley has served as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord.

“With gratitude to our Holy Father Pope Francis, and joy in the Lord, I am eager to begin a new chapter in my life of discipleship among the good people of the Diocese of Gaylord!” said Bishop-elect Walsh. “I am also most grateful to God for 27 years of priestly ministry in the Diocese of Scranton. I have been inspired and challenged to grow in faith through various diocesan assignments and will forever prayerfully remember all the lay faithful, religious, deacons, priests and bishops with whom and for whom I have served.

“In particular, I would like to acknowledge the kind support of Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. The most important act of gratitude I can offer is for my parents, Jerome and Nancy (Doud) Walsh. They, as well as my deceased grandparents, have been the most significant formators of my life. I have been blessed with a solid, but by no means ‘perfect,’ family that also includes my two brothers, two nieces, one nephew, aunts and uncles and many close first cousins. Looking forward, I hope to bring a missionary spirit to my episcopal ministry under the mantle of Divine Providence. From ‘Penn’s Woods’ to the land of ‘Great Lakes,’ I trust God’s loving plan.”

Bishop-elect Walsh was born on November 29, 1965. The son of Jerome and Nancy Walsh, he is a native of Scranton, Pa., and is a graduate of Scranton Central High School. He is one of three children, with brothers James and Joseph Walsh. He graduated from the University of Scranton in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in Health and Human Resources. He went on to complete his priestly studies at Mount St. Mary's

Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md., earning a Master of Divinity Degree. Bishop-elect Walsh received a Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University in 1999 and a Master of Social Work Degree from Marywood University in 2010.

Bishop-elect Walsh was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Scranton by Bishop James C. Timlin at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, Pa., on June 25, 1994. After ordination, Bishop-elect Walsh served as assistant pastor at Saint Rose of Lima Church, Carbondale, and the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton. In July 1999, he was appointed to his first pastorate at Saint Mary of the Lake Church, Lake Winola, as well as Director of Spiritual & Liturgical Formation at Saint Pius X Seminary in Dalton, Pa.. From July 2004-July 2006, he served as pastor at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Tunkhannock, until being appointed to serve as Episcopal Vicar for the Eastern Pastoral Region of the Diocese of Scranton.

In 2008, Bishop-elect Walsh became administrator of Saint Rita Church, Gouldsboro, and in 2009 was appointed administrator of Saint Anthony, Saint Bridget and Saint John the Baptist parishes in Throop. In July 2010, Bishop-elect Walsh was appointed to serve as pastor at the Church of Saint John, East Stroudsburg.

In January 2015, he was appointed Episcopal Vicar for Clergy by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. While serving in that role, Bishop-elect Walsh also served as Sacramental Minister for Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston. In July 2020, he was appointed pastor at Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Carbondale, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Carbondale. As Bishop-elect Walsh prepares to depart for Gaylord, Saint Rose of Lima Parish just completed a large-scale renovation project on its nearly 150-year-old building.

During his years of pastoral ministry, Bishop-elect Walsh also served in a variety of diocesan positions, including Director of Religious Formation at the former Sacred Heart High School in Carbondale and the former Bishop Hannan High School in Scranton. For five years he was chaplain at Saint Michael's School and for 12 years (1995-2007) he served as chaplain to the Deaf Community. Bishop-elect Walsh has also served as diocesan vocations director, was director of youth and young adult retreats at Fatima Center, and served for one year as the Diocesan Deputy Secretary for Catholic Human Services. In 2007, he was also appointed to the Board of Directors of the Notre Dame Regional School System.

Upon hearing the news of Bishop-elect Walsh's appointment, the current Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord, Bishop Walter A. Hurley, stated, "I am grateful to our Holy Father for appointing Bishop-elect Walsh to serve as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord. I warmly welcome him to this diocese, a unique and special region of Michigan, and assure him of our prayers and support as he looks forward to taking on this responsibility and his upcoming ordination and installation in March."

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The Diocese of Gaylord was established by His Holiness Pope St. Paul VI on July 20, 1971. The territory encompasses 11,171 square miles and includes the 21 most northern counties of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The region is home to nearly 50,000 Catholics, served by 75 parishes, 16 Catholic schools and many closely-related institutions. For more information, visit [www.dioceseofgaylord.org](http://www.dioceseofgaylord.org).

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