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**POPE FRANCIS NAMES
REVEREND KEITH J. CHYLINSKI,
REVEREND CHRISTOPHER R. COOKE,
AND REVEREND EFREN V. ESMILLA
AUXILIARY BISHOPS FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

*Bishop-elect Chylinski currently serves as the Rector of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary;
Bishop-elect Cooke currently serves as the Dean of Men at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary;
Bishop-elect Esmilla currently serves as the Pastor of Saint James Parish in Elkins Park and
Saint Martin of Tours Parish in Philadelphia.*

Today's Announcement

Today, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis has named Reverend Keith J. Chylinski, Reverend Christopher R. Cooke, and Reverend Efren V. Esmilla to serve as Auxiliary Bishops for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. They will join Auxiliary Bishop John J. McIntyre, who has served in that capacity since 2010.

They will succeed recently retired Auxiliary Bishops Edward M. Deliman and Michael J. Fitzgerald as well Bishop Timothy C. Senior, who had served as an Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia from 2009 until the summer of 2023 when he was appointed the Bishop of Harrisburg.

Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez introduced the new Bishops-elect during a news conference at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center this morning and announced that their Mass of Episcopal Ordination will be celebrated on Thursday, March 7, 2024 in the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. Archbishop Pérez will be the principal celebrant and consecrator at that Mass.

Background on the Role of an Auxiliary Bishop and the Assignment of Titular Sees

The role of an auxiliary bishop is to assist the diocesan bishop by sharing in his pastoral and administrative work and to act in his name. Like all bishops, they are successors to the Apostles. Each new auxiliary bishop's specific duties will be defined in the coming weeks and months. During this time of transition, they will continue in their current priestly assignments.

All auxiliary bishops are also assigned as the Ordinary of a Titular See by the Holy Father. Titular Sees are dioceses that were once active but are now dormant. Bishop-elect Chylinski has been assigned the Titular See of Gunela. Bishop-elect Cooke has been assigned the Titular See of Malliana. Bishop-elect Esmilla has been assigned the Titular See of Ottana.

Quotes from Archbishop Pérez and the Bishops-elect

In reflecting on the appointment of the new auxiliary bishops, Archbishop Pérez said, “This moment is one of great joy and thanksgiving for Philadelphia! We have been blessed by Pope Francis with three rich gifts today. The Holy Father’s appointment of Bishops-elect Chylinski, Cooke, and Esmilla continues a long tradition of priests from our Archdiocese being recognized for their ability to serve as bishops. It also demonstrates his confidence in these faithful and holy priests to serve God’s people right here at home in the Philadelphia region.

Our newest bishops are men of deep faith, great humility, broad pastoral as well as administrative experience, and zealous hearts that are on fire to serve as Missionary Disciples for Jesus Christ. I’ve known all of them for many years and have witnessed the transformational impact of their priestly ministry on a diverse array of people everywhere they have served. As the new bishops prepare to begin their episcopal ministry, I pledge them my support and extend my heartfelt congratulations.

I ask that all people in our local Church join me in praying that the Holy Spirit will strengthen our new bishops as successors to the Apostles. At the same time, let us join in expressing tremendous gratitude to Pope Francis for appointing three of our own priests to help build up and strengthen our Church far into the future.”

Bishop-elect Chylinski, age 52, was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 2007. Speaking to the press today he said, “I’m deeply thankful to the Holy Father for the gracious gift of this appointment as an auxiliary bishop. I certainly don’t consider myself deserving of it, but I accept the will of God and will serve Him to the best of my ability.

As this new journey begins to unfold, I know that the Lord and his Blessed Mother will be with us. I am confident that He will give me every strength I need to serve in this wonderful Archdiocese – in its richness of cultural diversity, in its wealth of faith and tradition, in the goodness and talent of its people. I pray for the strength and wisdom to do my small part as an instrument of Jesus Christ’s truth, beauty, joy, and healing love for every member of the Church in Philadelphia- especially to those who are most in need.”

Bishop-elect Cooke, age 50, was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 2006. At the news conference today, he said, “I am extraordinarily humbled to be standing here today as a newly appointed auxiliary bishop in Philadelphia. I am deeply grateful to Pope Francis for honoring me with this new ministry, and to Archbishop Pérez who was so instrumental in this appointment. To serve the local Church as an auxiliary bishop is not something I ever imagined. I am not perfect, and I am resolved to be the best follower of the Lord I can be, recognizing my

need to constantly receive the love of Him who created me. I look forward to journeying together in faith, that with the sacraments, we might be received by our Lord one day into heaven, our final hope.”

Bishop-elect Esmilla, age 61, was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 1993. During today’s news conference he remarked, “I am greatly humbled and honored to be chosen by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, as an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

I ask all of the clergy, men and women religious, and lay faithful our beloved local Church to pray for me while knowing that I will pray for all of you so that I can see how to serve you best. My great hope is that our beloved Archdiocese of Philadelphia will continue to grow spiritually and to grow in the number of souls as we all strive to be better Missionary Disciples for Jesus Christ in the world around us.”

Biographical Information Regarding Bishop-elect Keith J. Chylinski

Bishop-elect Keith J. Chylinski was born on July 23, 1971 to Edmund Chylinski and the late Kelly Donovan. A native of Schenectady, New York, he attended West Woods Elementary and Middle School in Hamden, Connecticut, and Conestoga High School in Berwyn, Pennsylvania.

Prior to entering the program of priestly formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Temple University. While studying at the Seminary, he earned a Master of Divinity Degree in 2006 and a Master of Arts Degree in 2007. He was ordained to the Priesthood by Cardinal Justin Rigali on May 19, 2007.

Bishop-elect Chylinski served as Parochial Vicar of Saint Anselm Parish (Philadelphia) from 2007 to 2011; Parochial Vicar of Mary Mother of the Redeemer Parish (North Wales) from 2011 to 2012; and a faculty member at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary from 2014 to 2022. He also served as a Board Member of the Council of Priests from 2009 to 2011 and assisted with weekend ministry at Saint Joseph Parish (Downingtown) from 2014 to 2017. He has served as a weekend assistant at Saint Alphonsus Parish (Maple Glen) since 2017.

Since 2022, Bishop-elect Chylinski has served as the Rector of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary.

Biographical Information Regarding Bishop-elect Christopher R. Cooke

Bishop-elect Christopher R. Cooke was born on November 8, 1973 to Randall Cooke and Mary Lou Cooke and grew up in Saint Vincent de Paul Parish (Richboro). Prior to entering the program of priestly formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Bishop-elect Cooke earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Delaware in 1996. He then worked in the field of chemical manufacturing and design. While studying at the Seminary, he earned a Master of Divinity Degree in 2005 and a Master of Arts Degree in 2006. He was ordained to the Priesthood by Cardinal Justin Rigali on May 20, 2006.

Bishop-elect Cooke served as Parochial Vicar of Saint Eleanor Parish (Collegeville) from 2006 to 2008; Parochial Vicar of Saint Martin of Tours Parish (Philadelphia) from 2008 to 2012; Parochial Administrator of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish (Norristown) from 2012-2013; and Director of the Spirituality Year Program at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary from 2013 to 2021. Bishop-elect Cooke also served as a Board Member of the Archdiocesan Council of Priests from 2011 to 2014.

Since 2021 he has served as the Dean of Men for the Theological Seminary at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary.

Biographical Information Regarding Bishop-elect Efren V. Esmilla

Bishop-elect Efren V. Esmilla was born on June 18, 1962 to the late Cristobal and Crispina Esmilla. Prior to entering the program of priestly formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from San Beda College in Manila, The Philippines, in 1984. While studying at the Seminary, he earned a Master of Divinity Degree in 1992. He was ordained to the Priesthood by Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua on May 15, 1993.

Bishop-elect Esmilla served as Parochial Vicar of Saint John Chrysostom Parish (Wallingford) from 1993 to 2001; Parochial vicar of Maternity B.V.M. Parish (Philadelphia) from 2001 to 2003; Assistant Director of Pastoral and Apostolic Formation and Priest Faculty Member at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary from 2003 to 2004; Director of the Spirituality Year Program at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary from 2004 to 2005; Parochial Vicar of Saint Martha Parish (Philadelphia) from 2005 to 2006; and Pastor of Our Lady of Hope Parish (Philadelphia) from 2006 to 2020.

Since 2020, Bishop-elect Esmilla has served as Pastor of Saint James Parish (Elkins Park). He also has served as the Spiritual Director for the Legion of Mary (Holy Family Curia) since 2001; Chaplain of the Archdiocesan Filipino Apostolate since 2005; and Pastor of Saint Martin of Tours Parish (Philadelphia) since 2021.

Additionally, Bishop-elect Esmilla served as Regional Dean of Deanery 12 (Lower Northeast Philadelphia) from 2017 to 2022; Adjunct Spiritual Director at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary from 2017 to 2020; and Parochial Administrator of Saint Martin of Tours Parish (Philadelphia) from May 2021 to October 2021.