

**INSTALLATION OF HIS EXCELLENCY NELSON JESUS PEREZ
AS 16TH ORDINARY and 10th ARCHBISHOP
OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF ST. PETER AND PAUL, PHILADELPHIA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2020, 2:00 PM**

Your Eminences, Your Excellency Archbishop Perez, Your Excellency Archbishop Chaput, Your Excellencies Auxiliary Bishops Deliman, Fitzgerald, McIntyre, Senior and Maginnis, My Brother Archbishops and Bishops, Dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious and Lay Faithful of the Church in Philadelphia, Dear Friends:

I greet you in the name of the Holy Father on this joyful day in this historic Archdiocese, an Archdiocese whose legacy includes the patrimony of faith handed on by St. John Neumann and St. Katherine Drexel as today Archbishop Perez is installed as the 10th Archbishop of Philadelphia.

I want to first acknowledge and thank Archbishop Chaput for his years of service as Archbishop of Philadelphia, for his 15 years of episcopal ministry in Denver and as Bishop of Rapid City before that. Your Excellency, you have been tireless in your promotion of the Faith and in your dedication to this local church. Everyone is aware of the difficult situation here in Philadelphia, and you have shown courage and prudence in making decisions that have left this Archdiocese and your successor in a position that the joyful message of the Gospel can continue to go forth. The hosting of the World Meeting of Families is also a sign of communion with the Successor of Saint Peter. I thank you cordially for a lifetime of dedication and service, and I believe firmly that you have earned a little rest!

Archbishop Perez, you do not get to rest! This Archdiocese needs you to be a shepherd that goes out to meet the flock with energy, zeal, and warmth. This Archdiocese is not the same as when you left it; the growing Latino population will look to you for leadership and to radiate Christ. The older Philadelphia Catholic population counts you as one of its own and looks to you to carry on the great traditions of faith in the Archdiocese, while innovating to account for changes in the culture and for the sake of the mission of evangelization.

As a Philadelphia priest, I ask that you to be close to your clergy who have suffered greatly in recent years. Above all, be close to the People of God who are looking for hope. During a weekly General Audience, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, once reflected on the theme of Christian hope, commenting:

“Life is often a desert, it is difficult to walk in life, but if we trust in God it can become beautiful and wide as a highway...When we are before a child, although we have many problems and many difficulties, a smile comes from within, because we see hope in front of us: a child is hope! And in this way, we must be able to discern in life the way of hope which leads us to find God, God who became a Child for us. He will make us smile, he will give us everything!” (General Audience, Wednesday, December 7, 2016)

Your Excellency, yours is no easy task. The Holy Father has great confidence in you, and the People of God in Philadelphia will support you with their prayers. Entrusting you to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, as well as to your saintly predecessor, Saint John Neumann, I will now read for you an English translation of our Holy Father’s Letter of Appointment.