

**REMARKS OF CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE FOR THE
CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS
AND INVESTITURE WITH THE PALLIUM
SHRINE OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
OCTOBER 16, 2023**

Your Excellency Archbishop Thomas, Your Eminence Cardinal Mahony, Your Excellencies, Archbishop from San Francisco and Archbishop from Los Angeles, and all of my brother Archbishops and Bishops; dear priests, deacons, consecrated religious, and members of the faithful; dear friends:

As the personal representative of the Holy Father to the United States of America, I want all of you to know the spiritual closeness of Pope Francis, and to feel the blessing of his paternal affection for you on this joyous day. For me, it is a pleasure to join in this historic celebration: the raising of this local Church to the level of an Archdiocese, and the imposition of the pallium upon its first Archbishop, George Leo Thomas.

What we celebrate today is this local Church *being what the Church is called to be*: a living sign of the presence of her Savior in the world. As Archbishop Thomas has said, the elevation of this local Church is a result of the dynamism and vitality of the Catholic faith here. It is the fruit of the pastoral care and labors of the clergy and the lay faithful working together. It is the outcome of synodality – women and men walking together on a shared journey of faith. Catholics in this local Church are realizing the vision of the Second Vatican Council: not only that all are called to holiness, but that all the baptized – clergy, religious, and lay – *share responsibility* for the mission of the Gospel. Today, because the laborers in that mission have been reaping a bountiful harvest, the time has come to recognize the fruit of this endeavor by making Las Vegas a Metropolitan See.

Your fundamental mission as a Church will not change: to preach the Gospel; to offer to everyone, especially the poor and those who mourn, the Good News of Salvation; and to love God and your neighbor. But I hope that this elevation, and the celebration that surrounds it, will prove to be a source of encouragement and renewal for all the “laborers in the field”. Knowing that the Holy Father sees you and recognizes you is one way of remembering that God the Father *always* sees you, and wants you to delight in being his beloved children.

Congratulations, Archbishop Thomas and Bishop Gordon. Congratulations to all the bishops, priests and deacons, religious, and members of the lay faithful who have been, or currently are, a part of the life of this local Church.

And now, with much joy, I will read the Papal Decree.