

**EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF  
THE MOST REVEREND MICHAEL IZEN  
AS AUXILIARY BISHOP OF THE  
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS  
CATHEDRAL OF ST. PAUL  
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA  
APRIL 11, 2023**

Your Excellency Archbishop Hebda, My Brother Bishops, Dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious, and Lay Faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis; Dear Friends: Happy Easter!

I still enjoy good memories of my time with you a little over one year ago, when I was here for the ordination of Bishop Joseph Williams. I am pleased to be with you once again, as Father Michael Izen is now consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis, to assist in the ministry of Archbishop Hebda. Once again, this local Church rejoices to see one of its own parish priests raised to the fullness of the priesthood. Even though the parishioners in Stillwater and Bayport, and the school family of Saint Croix, will miss Father Izen, he is now able to share the gift of his pastoral care with all the people of God in this Archdiocese.

Bishop-elect Izen, I understand you have a background in mathematics and computer science. And yet, I am sure that you never “calculated” that you would become a bishop! You said that you were “a little terrified” when you received this call. Don’t worry: it’s okay to be *a little* terrified... just not too much! Hopefully, you are like the holy women on the morning of the Resurrection: “fearful, yet overjoyed”.

After all, many people are joyful that you are going to be their bishop. In choosing you for this ministry, Pope Francis has elected a priest whom the Church recognizes as a true pastor and a spiritual father. Like Christ the Good Shepherd, you know the names of your sheep, and your sheep know and hear your voice. And as a father, you have loved and cared for your spiritual children of all ages. While it is hard to leave your parish family, God now gives you an even larger spiritual family in your ministry as bishop. These members of God’s family will be blessed by your ministry; and God will also give you many consolations in that same ministry. As Pope Francis said to a group of bishops:

**“The task consigned to you is to be fathers to everyone.... May your heart be ever big enough to accept each person, as Christ’s heart knows how to take in every human being, with divine love.”<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> *Ad Limina* Address to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Bosnia and Herzogovina, 16 March 2015.

Bishop-elect Izen, may God continue to expand your fatherly and pastoral heart, as you become a bishop.

With joy, I will now read the Apostolic Letter of Appointment.