

**MASS OF WELCOME FOR THE MOST REVEREND JEFFREY M. MONFORTON  
AS AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DETROIT  
CATHEDRAL OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN  
NOVEMBER 7, 2023**

Your Excellency Archbishop Vigneron, my dear brother bishops, fellow clergy, dear religious and members of the lay faithful, dear friends:

It is an honor for me to be here in order to represent the Holy Father as Bishop Monforton is welcomed back to his home Archdiocese as one of its Auxiliary Bishops. Allow me to convey to all of you the Pope's spiritual closeness and paternal affection. In a homily last Friday, Pope Francis recalled the very first words with which Pope Benedict described himself following his election: "a *humble* laborer in the vineyard of the Lord." Pope Francis said:

"Indeed, Christians, especially the Pope, the Cardinals and the Bishops, are called to be humble laborers: to serve, not to be served and to put the fruits of the Lord's vineyard before their advantage. What a fine thing it is to renounce ourselves for the Church of Jesus!"<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Monforton, your years of priestly and episcopal ministry have shown you the truth of these words. From your work in parishes, to teaching in high school, to serving as the Cardinal's secretary, to being a seminary rector, and most recently your 11 years as Bishop of Steubenville, you have been a laborer in the Lord's vineyard.

By continuing to live your episcopal motto, "Faith comes from hearing," you will listen both to the voice of the Holy Spirit and to the people of God, in order to serve this local Church in the manner to which our Lord is now calling you. Be assured, then, of "the comforting joy of the Gospel" which will accompany both you and the members of the faithful in your ministry in the Archdiocese.

I will now read the Papal Decree of your appointment.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, Homily for Mass in Memory of Pope Benedict XVI and the Cardinals and Bishops departed during the course of the year, November 3, 2023.