

**REMARKS OF H.E. ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE  
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AT THE EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF  
THE MOST REVEREND JUAN ESPOSITO-GARCIA AND  
THE MOST REVEREND EVELIO MENJIVAR-AYALA  
AS AUXILIARY BISHOPS OF WASHINGTON  
ST. MATTHEW CATHEDRAL, WASHINGTON, D.C.  
FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

Your Eminences, Cardinal Gregory, Cardinal Wuerl, Cardinal O'Malley, and Cardinal Rosa Chávez; Your Excellency Archbishop Broglio, President of the USCCB; Dear brother Bishops and other guests from El Salvador and visitors from Argentina; Dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious, and Lay Faithful of the Archdiocese of Washington; Dear Friends.

I wish to greet in a particular way, and to thank, Bishop Mario Dorsonville who recently and promptly accepted the Holy Father's call to become the Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux. I know that your pastoral heart, which has led you to give such generous service in this Archdiocese, as both priest and bishop, will find ample opportunities for service to the people of your new Diocese. In expressing the appreciation of this local church, I bid you "bon voyage"; but, I add in hope, "Au revoir"!

I am pleased to be with you all today, representing our Holy Father Pope Francis, in this historical Cathedral of St Matthew. Here, Bishops-elect Juan Espósito-Garcia and Evelio Menjivar-Ayala will be ordained to the fullness of the priesthood and begin their ministry as Auxiliary Bishops of Washington and close collaborators of Cardinal Wilton Gregory.

Dear Bishops-elect: On September 23, 2015 in this very Cathedral, Pope Francis spoke to the bishops of the United States. Bishop-elect Espósito, in your introductory news conference, you recounted these words that the Holy Father said on that day, more than 7 years ago:

**"Whenever a hand reaches out to do good or to show the love of Christ, to dry a tear or bring comfort to the lonely, to show the way to one who is lost or to console a broken heart, to help the fallen or to teach those thirsting for truth, to forgive or to offer a new start in God...know that the Pope is at your side, the Pope supports you. He puts his hand on your own, a hand wrinkled with age, but by God's grace still able to support and encourage"** (MEETING WITH THE BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 23 SEPTEMBER 2015).

Bishop-elect Menjivar: at the news conference in December, you expressed your intention **"to walk with [the people of God]...sharing their own challenges, celebrating and even crying together.... To be with them in the joyful moments as well as in not-so-joyful moments."** Your words remind me of something that Pope Francis shared with bishops some time ago, from a text called "The Beatitudes for a Bishop". He said:

**“Blessed is the bishop who is not afraid to wet his face with tears, so that in them may be reflected the sorrow of the people, and the work of priests; and who finds God’s consolation in the embrace of those who suffer.”** (ADDRESS TO THE OPENING SESSION OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE ITALIAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, 22 NOVEMBER 2021)

Bishops-elect Espósito and Menjivar: there is special joy today for the members of this local Church who have come from Latin-American nations as you have – especially Argentinians and Salvadorans. But we *all* share this joy in celebrating your ordination as bishops, and we look forward to your ministry to the Pilgrim People of God throughout this Archdiocese. We look forward to the ways in which you will walk with God’s people, accompany them in their sufferings, and help them to feel the joy of the risen Christ. We know that this is the deepest desire for both of you, and we trust that God will give you the grace to carry out this ministry as bishops.

And so, I now have the joy to read a translation of the Apostolic Letters of Appointment.