

**REMARKS OF HIS EXCELLENCY
ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE FOR THE
EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF
THE MOST REVEREND ANTHONY CELINO
AS AUXILIARY BISHOP OF EL PASO
ST. PATRICK CATHEDRAL
EL PASO, TEXAS
MARCH 31, 2023**

Your Excellency Archbishop García-Siller, Metropolitan Archbishop of San Antonio; Bishop Seitz; all my brother Bishops; dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious, and Members of the Faithful; Dear Friends:

Today is an historic day for the Diocese of El Paso, as an Auxiliary Bishop is installed for the first time. I am happy to be present with you, and to manifest the Holy Father's care for this local Church, where the mission of the Gospel – carried out amidst many complexities and challenges – is so vital to the future of this region and of this country. I share the confidence of Pope Francis and Bishop Seitz in entrusting this new responsibility to Bishop-elect Celino – both because of his extensive experience in ministry and because of the pastoral heart which motivates him.

Bishop-elect Celino: last month when your appointment was announced, you spoke about how your priestly ministry has been informed by the many cultures that enrich this Diocese; and how you have learned to speak – as Pope Francis calls it – “the language of the culture of encounter”. This is so important. I was with the Holy Father when he visited Ciudad Juárez in 2016, and at that time he said: “Anything we can do to foster dialogue, encounter, and the search for better alternatives and opportunities is already an accomplishment to be valued and highlighted.”¹

Whether you are speaking Spanish, or English, or Tagalog, the language that everyone understands is the language of encounter. During your last 25 years of priestly ministry, you have learned to “speak” this language. In the parishes you have served, you have helped the faithful encounter Christ in the Word of God and the Sacraments. In your application of canon law, you have kept before your eyes the salvation of souls, which is the supreme law of the Church. In your service of the administration of the Diocese, you have collaborated with Bishop Seitz in his pastoral governance of the priests and people. In all of these ministries, your own daily encounter with Christ in prayer has given you the strength and wisdom to walk with others. The grace of episcopal consecration, which you will receive at this Mass, will enrich you even more to be a father, a brother, and a servant to all in need.

Bishop-elect Celino, know that you are accompanied by the prayers of many as you take this next step in your ministry. Congratulations and blessings to you! With much joy, I will now read the Papal Decree appointing you as Auxiliary Bishop of El Paso.

¹ Meeting with the World of Labor: Address of Pope Francis at Bachilleres College, State of Chihuahua, Ciudad Juárez, 17 February 2016.