



THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 24, 2015

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Statement of Bishop-elect Steven J. Lopes

November 24, 2015

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Dear Friends,

It is with humility and in a spirit of obedience to our Lord that I accept this appointment to serve as Bishop of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter. Trusting in the intercession of Our Lady, the consciousness of my limitations yields to gratitude, hope, and joy.

I am grateful for the ecumenical vision of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who reminded us that unity of faith allows for vibrant diversity in the expression of that faith. I am grateful for the fatherly care Pope Francis continues to show for the Ordinariates, born from the rich patrimony of English Catholicism. Indeed, in the approval of the new Missal for the celebration of Mass, in the careful consideration of clergy who desire to join us, and in the appointment of the first Ordinariate Bishop, Pope Francis is making this model of communion-in-diversity ever more concrete.

Monsignor Jeffrey Steenson has been for me an outstanding example of wisdom, graciousness, and evangelical zeal. He truly has the heart of a Priest and I am confident that all of the faithful and clergy of the Ordinariate join me in saying: Thank you. We could not have asked for a better leader to lay the foundations for the Ordinariate in the United States and Canada.

Through my work at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, I have come to know firsthand the Priests and communities of this Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter. They have a passion for the communion of the Church and for the truth of the Gospel as contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition that fills me with hope. I see the vitality that the Ordinariate brings to the Universal Church, and I know that there is a bright future ahead.

It is a great joy and privilege to be joined to this Particular Church under the patronage of St. Peter and to share in its mission of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I stand among women and men for whom “Catholic communion” is no abstract concept. They have sacrificed for it. They have displayed courage and fortitude in favor of it. They have thrown wide open the doors of their hearts to the infinite possibilities of what God’s grace can accomplish in and through them. It can and should move the heart of every Catholic to witness this amazing courage and this vitality in our Church.

So here we stand, together, in this thing with a peculiar name, “Ordinariate,” but with a dynamism and beauty all its own. It is the Lord who has accomplished this in his Church, and great are the works of the Lord!

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