

**EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF
THE MOST REVEREND DAVID BONNAR
AS SIXTH BISHOP OF YOUNGSTOWN
CATHEDRAL OF SAINT COLUMBA, YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
JANUARY 12, 2021**

Your Excellency Metropolitan Archbishop Dennis Schnurr, Your Excellency Bishop David Zubick, Your Excellency Bishop Paul Bradley, Your Excellency Bishop Thomas Tobin, My Brother Archbishops and Bishops, Dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Youngstown, Dear Friends: to each of you, warm greetings and peace in this new year.

I greet you in the name of Pope Francis as the Reverend David Bonnar will be consecrated as a bishop and installed as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Youngstown, following the death of the late-Bishop George Murry, S.J., who served admirably as Bishop of this See. Having distinguished himself as a Pastor, Vocation Director, Director of Permanent Deacon Formation, and Vicar for Clergy in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, in addition to serving as editor of *The Priest Magazine*, the Holy Father has called him to serve the People of God in Youngstown.

Your Excellency, you will note that I did mention that you served as chaplain for twelve years to the Pittsburgh Steelers! That is because we are in a part of the country in which there are also many fans of the Cleveland Browns! There is always a need for a bishop to be “ecumenical”!

Like Pittsburgh, the Diocese of Youngstown has many Christians from the Churches of the East, and a fundamental task of your episcopal ministry will be to work for unity. In its recent *Vademecum*, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity stated:

As a shepherd of the flock the bishop has the distinct responsibility of gathering all into unity. He is “the visible principle and foundation of unity” in his particular church (*Lumen gentium* [LG] §23). The service of unity is not just one of the tasks of the bishop’s ministry; it is fundamental to it. The bishop “should sense the urgency of promoting ecumenism” (*Apostolorum Successores* §18). Rooted in his personal prayer, concern for unity must inform every part of his ministry: in his teaching of the faith, in his sacramental ministry, and through the decisions of his pastoral care, he is called to build and strengthen that unity for which Jesus prayed at the Last Supper (cf. Jn 17). (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Bishop and Christian Unity: An Ecumenical Vademecum*, 5 June 2020, 4.)

Your Excellency, as you begin your episcopal ministry and mission to the people of Youngstown, be a source of unity and a builder of bridges, not only among the churches, but within the Church itself, uniting your priests, deacons, and the lay faithful in worship of and service to the Triune God.

Bishop-elect Bonnar, we thank you for accepting the call to serve as Chief Shepherd of this Local Church. We also publicly express our confidence that as you humbly yet insistently teach, govern and sanctify in the example of the one Good Shepherd, you will be a prophet, witness and servant of Christian hope (*Pastores Gregis*, no. 3) for the flock entrusted to your pastoral care and also for the community at large. May the prayerful intercession of St. Columba, continually encourage you in your daily episcopal ministry.

I would like to thank Monsignor Robert Siffrin for his service as Diocesan Administrator.

And now, it is my pleasure to read for you an English translation of the Apostolic Letter, by which our Holy Father appointed His Excellency David Bonnar as Bishop of the Diocese of Youngstown.