

**INSTALLATION OF
MOST REVEREND SHELTON J. FABRE
AS FIFTH ARCHBISHOP OF LOUISVILLE
KENTUCKY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
MARCH 30, 2022**

Your Eminences, Cardinal Rigali and Cardinal Gregory, Your Excellency Archbishop Fabre, Your Excellency Archbishop Kurtz, My Brother Archbishops and Bishops, Dear Priests, Deacons, Consecrated Religious and Lay Faithful of the Church in Louisville, Dear Friends:

I greet you in the name of the Holy Father on this joyful day in this historic Archdiocese, an Archdiocese whose legacy includes the patrimony of faith handed on by Bishop Flaget, the great missionary Bishop of Bardstown and later of Louisville. Although many people know Kentucky as the Bluegrass State and celebrate rightly its great basketball teams and horse racing, the roots of the Faith are very deep here in the Archdiocese of Louisville.

Today a new era begins in this historic Archdiocese. I want to thank Archbishop Kurtz for his nearly fifteen years of service as Archbishop of Louisville, serving more than seven years as Bishop of Knoxville prior to his arrival here. Archbishop Kurtz has not only led this Archdiocese through difficult times of transition but has also served as President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Your Excellency, thank you for decades of dedicated service to the Church here in Louisville and throughout the country.

Your Excellency, Archbishop Fabre, you have big shoes to fill! The Holy Father, grateful for the ministry of Archbishop Kurtz and solicitous for this local church, wanting them to have another outstanding shepherd has chosen you. You have distinguished yourself as a priest in Baton Rouge, Auxiliary Bishop in New Orleans, and as Bishop of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

The Archdiocese of Louisville will not be your "Old Kentucky Home" but your new Kentucky home, and just as you brought healing to the people of Louisiana after Hurricane Ida, so now, you must live here your episcopal motto to comfort God's people with the balm of His Mercy and Compassion, showing forth the closeness and tenderness of God.

Recently, in addressing a symposium on the priesthood, the Holy Father mentioned the need for the priest, and if it is true for the priest, it is also true for the bishop, to be close to the people. Pope Francis said:

“Closeness to the People of God, a closeness that, enriched by those other forms of closeness, invites and indeed demands that we imitate the Lord’s own “style”. That style is one of closeness, compassion and tenderness, in which we act not as judges, but as Good Samaritans who acknowledge the wounds of our people, their silent sufferings, the self-denial and sacrifices made by so many fathers and mothers ... A style of closeness that allows us to pour balm upon wounds and to proclaim a year of favor from the Lord (cf. Is 61:2). It is imperative to remember that the people of God are hoping to find shepherds in the style of Jesus.” (ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS AT THE SYMPOSIUM PROMOTED BY THE CONGREGATION FOR BISHOPS, 17 FEBRUARY 2022)

Your Excellency, as you begin your ministry here in Louisville as Metropolitan Archbishop, invoking the intercession of St. Joseph and the Holy Mother of God, we hope and pray that you will bring comfort to the People of God and that you will also strengthen your brother bishops of this Province in the bonds of communion and fraternity.

And now, with great joy, I will read for you a translation of the Apostolic Letter of Appointment.