

**WELCOME TO THE MOST REVEREND
ARCHBISHOP PAUL FITZPATRICK RUSSELL
AS AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DETROIT
CATHEDRAL OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
JULY 7, 2022**

Your Excellency Archbishop Vigneron, Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Auxiliary Bishops Donald Hanchon, Arturo Cepeda, Gerard Battersby and Robert Fisher, and my Brother Bishops, (in particular, Bishop Francis Kalabat of the Chaldean Eparchy of Saint Thomas the Apostle), the Directors General for Taiwan, Canada, Japan and Mexico, we come together today in this beautiful Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament for a Liturgy of Welcome to Archbishop Paul Fitzpatrick Russell as Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Vigneron.

Recently, our Holy Father in his Apostolic Constitution on the Reform of the Curia, *Praedicate Evangelium*, spoke of the Church as a mirror of Christ's own mission of love in the world. The Church becomes increasingly radiant as she brings to humanity the supernatural gift of faith as a "light for our way, guiding our journey through time". The Holy Father speaks of the Church, at the service of the Gospel, becoming "a star to brighten the horizon of our journey at a time when mankind is particularly in need of light." This is in great part what is happening today, even at this very moment, when one of Christ's disciples is chosen to assist Archbishop Vigneron in bringing further light to the Church here in Detroit.

How blessed we all are to receive among us the light of Christ's presence in the person of Archbishop Paul Russell.

Dear Archbishop, although you were born in Massachusetts, you spent the great majority of your childhood in Northern Michigan, where you grew up and where the Lord eventually called you to your Priestly Vocation which began in 1987, in Boston. Your service to the Church has been widespread, especially in your mission in the Vatican Diplomatic Service in various parts of the world - Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Switzerland, Nigeria, and Taiwan. In 2016 you were appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Turkey and Turkmenistan and later Azerbaijan. This Episcopal appointment enriched your experience even further.

In addition, Divine Providence was at work in your life in unique ways, even before these events. Archbishop Russell, when you entered St. John's Seminary in Boston in the late 1970's, where your father's family lived, and after spending a year as an exchange student in France, you had the great privilege of having your paternal grandmother give you a photograph of her cousin, Fr. Michal Piasczynski, a Polish priest who had been killed in the Nazi concentration camps during World War II. In 1999, you learned that Pope St. John Paul II would beatify Fr. Piasczynski along with a number of other Polish martyrs. What an inspiration this must have been for you!

Archbishop Russell, you bring with you an invaluable perspective of the Universal Church and the joy of having been a missionary disciple for many nations.

As we know, the Archdiocese of Detroit is one of the most ethnically diverse dioceses in the U.S., with Mass being celebrated on a regular basis in more than a dozen languages. Truly, you should feel right

at home here in the Archdiocese of Detroit, where Archbishop Vigneron welcomes you back with open arms.

Your Excellency, we extend to you a warm and heartfelt welcome; your presence among us is a great blessing and a source of inspiration! Our prayers are with you. May the Year of Prayer for Priestly Vocations which Archbishop Vigneron has initiated recently at Pentecost be enriched by your work and example among us. May we all bring light to one another in our own unique mission that God has given to each of us in our life of faith.