

**REMARKS OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AT THE EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF
THE MOST REVEREND KEITH J. CHYLINSKI
THE MOST REVEREND CHRISTOPHER R. COOKE
THE MOST REVEREND EFREN V. ESMILLA
AS AUXILIARY BISHOPS OF PHILADELPHIA
CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
MARCH 7, 2024**

Greetings to my brother Archbishops and Bishops who are here today. In a special way, I want to acknowledge the presence of the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halych. His Beatitude, along with members of the Permanent Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, are accompanying Archbishop Borys Gudziak, who is the Metropolitan for the Ukrainian Catholics in the United States. Welcome to these our brothers from the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Please know that we have not forgotten you and the tormented people of Ukraine who are suffering from war. At our parishes, in our dioceses of the United States, you remain daily in the prayers of the faithful.

To all the priests, deacons, consecrated religious, and members of the lay faithful, who have gathered in such great number for this celebration: Greetings! Your Excellency Archbishop Pérez: I offer to you, to the entire Church of Philadelphia, and to all who are part of this celebration the warm greetings and spiritual closeness of the Holy Father. At a Mass for the ordination of bishops, Pope Francis said:

“Please, do not forget these four forms of closeness: closeness to God in prayer, closeness to bishops in the episcopal body, closeness to priests, and closeness to the flock. May the Lord let you grow on this path of closeness, so that you will better imitate the Lord, because he has always been and is near to us, and with his closeness that is compassionate and tender, he leads us forward.”¹

¹ Pope Francis, Homily at Holy Mass with Episcopal Ordinations, 17 October 2021.

Bishops-elect Chylinski, Cooke, and Esmilla: I know that you will continue to exercise the kind of closeness of which the Pope speaks, since it is how you have carried out your priestly ministry to this point – as pastors, in priestly formation, and in service to your brother priests. Dear Brothers: notwithstanding the sense of awe and unworthiness that you feel at the responsibility which the Holy Father has entrusted to you in electing you as bishops, take courage in knowing that you have been prepared well for this new ministry. I am confident that God, who has begun a good work in you, will carry it through to completion in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Church has a custom that, when a man is ordained a bishop but does not have his own diocese to govern – as the case is with auxiliary bishops – he is given what is called a “titular see”: a former diocese that no longer functions as such, but to which the bishop is assigned by way of a title. Today, I feel that I must give a special exhortation to one of the new bishops, who has been assigned as the titular bishop of Gunela, an ancient town in north Africa. Since 1995, until I became a Cardinal, Gunela was *my* titular see. Bishop-elect Chylinski: as my successor, I trust that you will provide for the Church of Gunela the same *exquisite care* that it received for the last 28 years!

Congratulations to all of you, and know of my prayers and support.

At this time I will read the three Apostolic Letters of Appointment by the Pope.