

**REMARKS OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF THE MOST REVEREND JAMES T. RUGGIERI
AS THIRTEENTH BISHOP OF PORTLAND
CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION – PORTLAND, MAINE
MAY 7, 2024**

Your Excellency Bishop Deeley and all of my brother bishops; dear priests, deacons, consecrated religious, and members of the faithful; dear friends:

It is my pleasure to be with you today as the personal representative of Pope Francis, and to assure you of his spiritual closeness and prayers as we celebrate the ordination of Fr. James Ruggieri as the 13th Bishop of the Diocese of Portland.

Bishop Deeley, thank you for your service to God and his Church: more than 50 years as a priest, 11 years as a bishop, and ten of those years caring for this Church in Maine. Thank you and God bless you!

Bishop-elect Ruggieri, congratulations! Your ministry as a pastor in Providence has offered an effective testimony to what the Pope said a couple of years ago on the World Day of the Poor: “Where the poor are concerned, it is not talk that matters; what matters is rolling up our sleeves and putting our faith into practice through a direct involvement, one that cannot be delegated” (13 NOVEMBER 2022).

Your closeness to the poor is one of the reasons that the Holy Father has desired to make you the shepherd of an even greater number of people. You will remember, of course, in your ministry as bishop, the many faces of poverty in our culture: the material poverty, to be sure; but also the poverty that exists where Christ is not known, or where his love and mercy are not fully appreciated by those who are struggling to recognize their own dignity. For that reason, your work of evangelization, teaching, and your personal presence among the people of this vast diocese will be a great enrichment for the people of Maine – Catholics, as well as people of other faiths, and those who are still struggling to believe in a God who loves them.

Be assured that the Blessed Mother and your personal patron saints, who have always accompanied you in your pastoral service among God’s people, will be with you as bishop, interceding for you and helping you to make a pathway for many people to the heart of God.

At this time, I will read the Pope’s letter appointing you Bishop.