



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Appointment of The Most Reverend Richard W. Smith as Twelfth Archbishop of Vancouver

February 25, 2025

VANCOUVER, BC – Early this morning, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis has appointed Archbishop Richard W. Smith as the next Archbishop of Vancouver and accepted Archbishop J. Michael Miller’s resignation from the pastoral governance of the Archdiocese. Archbishop Miller has been named Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vancouver until the new Archbishop’s arrival.

Archbishop Smith, 65, has been Archbishop of Edmonton since 2007. He has been a priest for almost 38 years and a bishop since 2002. With his move to Vancouver, he will have served the Church from coast to coast. After ministering in the Archdiocese of Halifax, his birthplace, he was named Bishop of Pembroke, Ontario, before moving to Edmonton.

During his 17 years in Edmonton, Archbishop Smith served as President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, spiritual adviser to the Catholic Women’s League of Canada, and on the board of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute. The Archbishop is currently a member of the Canadian Catholic Indigenous Council and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA).

Archbishop Smith was the general coordinator of Pope Francis’ historic pilgrimage to Canada in July 2022—the fourth papal visit to Canada and the first since Saint John Paul II visited in 2002.

In Halifax, he held the office of vicar general and was responsible for pastoral ministry to French-speaking Catholics in the Archdiocese.

Archbishop Smith was chaplain to the deaf community in Halifax from 1986-1991. He was also a professor of theology at St. Peter’s Seminary in London, Ontario.

Ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1987, for the Archdiocese of Halifax, Archbishop Smith pursued further studies in theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, earning a licentiate degree in 1993 and a doctorate in 1998.

Archbishop Smith extended his heartfelt appreciation to Archbishop Miller “for the wonderful leadership he has provided. I wish him God’s choicest blessings as he enters retirement. He has served in exemplary fashion both the Archdiocese of Vancouver and the Church in Canada.

“I look forward to meeting the clergy, consecrated women, men, and lay faithful of the Archdiocese, and pray that the Lord will enrich us all with the grace we need to embrace anew and together the great mission of the Church.



Archbishop Miller greeted the appointment with “gratitude to the Holy Father and great satisfaction,” assuring Archbishop Smith of his prayers and fraternal support.

“Vancouver has been given a shepherd of extraordinary gifts and vast experience. We warmly welcome Archbishop Smith, who is already familiar with the challenges facing us here—evangelization, passing on the faith to young people, Indigenous reconciliation, vocations to the priesthood, to name just a few.

“I am extremely happy knowing that the faithful of this Archdiocese are entrusted to such capable and dedicated hands.

“We are deeply grateful to Pope Francis for discerning this appointment over an extended period of time, allowing it to be announced even as he deals with serious illness.”

“We have waited a long time for the next Archbishop,” Archbishop Miller observed, “But it has proved well worth the wait.”

In connection with this morning’s announcement, Archbishop Miller and Archbishop Smith called for renewed prayers for Pope Francis.

“We have been very close to the Holy Father in recent days, praying fervently for him throughout the Archdiocese. The appointment of a new Archbishop brings the Pope and his ministry as Successor of Peter even nearer to our hearts and minds,” Archbishop Miller said.

Archbishop Smith said “Let us unite in prayer at this particular moment for our beloved Pope Francis. May the Lord grant him strength and peace in this time of serious illness.”

Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, arrived in Vancouver in 2007 as Coadjutor Archbishop, having been Archbishop Secretary at the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome. He succeeded the late Archbishop Raymond Roussin, SM, as Archbishop of Vancouver in January 2009.

As required by Church law, Archbishop Miller submitted his resignation to the Pope on his 75th birthday, July 9, 2021, but was asked to remain in office until his successor’s arrival. He will continue in office as Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

Plans for the installation of Archbishop Smith are not yet finalized, but it will likely take place in late May. Details will be announced as soon as they are available.

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Media Contacts

Matthew Furtado

Communications Director
Archdiocese of Vancouver
media@rcav.org

Andrew Ehrkamp

Communications Director
Archdiocese of Edmonton
(780) 399-6523 cell
Andrew.Ehrkamp@caedm.ca