NEWS

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**Bishop Chad W. Zielinski to be Installed as**

**Fifth Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of New Ulm**

**NEW ULM, MN –** The Most Reverend Chad W. Zielinski, 58, who served as bishop of Fairbanks, Alaska, since November 8, 2014, will be installed as the fifth bishop of the Catholic Diocese of New Ulm on Tuesday, September 27, 2022, at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye, Minn.

*Due to limited seating, this event is by invitation only. The Mass will be live streamed at www.dnu.org.*

Presiding will be the Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda, archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, in the presence of the Most Reverend Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Bishop Zielinski succeeds Bishop John M. LeVoir, who retired on August 10, 2020, after 12 years of service to the diocese. Monsignor Douglas L. Grams has served as diocesan administrator since 2020.

There will be a Celebration of Solemn Vespers (prayer service) on Monday, September 26 at 6:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm, with a reception immediately following in the church basement. *Everyone is welcome to attend. Vespers will be live streamed at* [*www.dnu.org*](http://www.dnu.org)*.*

“I am most grateful to our Holy Father for entrusting me to serve as the shepherd of the Diocese of New Ulm,” said Bishop Zielinski. “As I leave the vast expanse of Northern Alaska, I am fully aware of the countless blessings I received from 46 parishes. The faithful of the entire Diocese of Fairbanks patiently helped form me to be the shepherd I am today. Our Native Alaskan brothers and sisters have opened my mind and heart to the cultural beauty and richness of their traditional way of life. I come to the Diocese of

New Ulm with the same open heart and mind, eager to learn and encounter new blessings as I visit parishes and families in this beautiful prairie land of south and west-central Minnesota. Guided by the Holy Spirit, together we continue our journey of faith into a new era of peace filled with hope in Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Zielinski is a native of Detroit, Michigan, born on September 8, 1964. He is the son of Linda and the late Donald Zielinski of Alpena, Michigan, and is the oldest in a family of five children. After graduating from Alpena High School in 1982, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and, while stationed in Idaho, attended Boise State College and Park College. Having completed his tour of duty in 1986, he

entered Mount Angel Seminary in St. Benedict, Oregon, where he earned a bachelor’s degree with honors in Philosophy in 1989. He was accepted as a seminarian for the Diocese of Gaylord and entered Sacred

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Heart Major Seminary in Detroit to complete his spiritual formation and theological studies, receiving his Master of Divinity degree in 1996. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 8, 1996, by Bishop Patrick R. Cooney at St. Mary Cathedral in Gaylord.

Following the terrorist attacks of 2001, and aware of the great need for Catholic military chaplains, Bishop Cooney released him to serve in the Archdiocese for the Military Services. In 2002, he began his chaplaincy at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota. From 2003 to 2005, he was stationed in Suffolk, England, before returning to the U.S. and being assigned to HQ Air Force Recruiting Service at Randolph Air Force Base in Schertz, Texas. In 2009, he was appointed Roman Catholic Cadet Chaplain at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In 2012 he was called to Alaska to serve as chaplain to the 354th Fighter Wing at Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks, Alaska. In the course of his military career, Bishop Zielinski served three tours of duty in war zones, including Iraq and Afghanistan. He received numerous military awards and decorations for his service and was promoted to Major in July 2013.

On December 15, 2014, he was ordained and installed as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska. Following his installation, he served two years in the reserves at Eielson Air Force Base and retired as a Major on January 1, 2017.

On July 12, 2022, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Zielinski as the fifth bishop of the Diocese of New Ulm.

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**Note to Media: Media passes are required for all news outlet representatives attending the installation on Tuesday, September 27. Videographers, photographers, and reporters are asked to make arrangements with the diocesan Office of Communications, (507) 233-5332, no later than Tuesday, September 20, for passes and gallery space.**