



Catholic Cemetery Conference Member Ordained as Auxiliary Bishop

HAMILTON - Reverend Paul Gerard Bergie, a priest of the Diocese of Hamilton, and a member of the Catholic Cemetery Conference, was ordained August 24 as auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton following his appointment in July by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

"I approach my ordination with awe, humility and gratitude," said Bishop Bergie. "It is truly an honor to become a Bishop to serve the people of God."

Bishop Bergie, 46, will join Bishop Matthew Ustrzycki as Auxiliary Bishop to The Most Reverend Anthony F. Tonnos, Bishop of Hamilton. Bishop Tonnos, himself a long time member of the Catholic Cemetery Conference, has spoken or celebrated mass at several annual conventions, including the last convention at Providence, Rhode Island.

Bishop Bergie was most recently the pastor at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Hamilton while serving as Chancellor of the Diocese. He holds a Masters of Divinity degree from the University of Western Ontario, and a licentiate in Canon Law from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. He has also served on the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal.

Bishop Bergie was born in Hamilton and attended St. Vincent de Paul elementary school and Cathedral High School. During his childhood he was an avid hockey player and altar server in his home parish of Sts. Peter and Paul. Bishop Bergie entered St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario and was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Hamilton by Bishop Tonnos in 1984.

"The Holy Father's appointment of Gerard Bergie as Auxiliary Bishop of Hamilton was received with joy throughout the Diocese," said Bishop Tonnos. "His ordination is a time of celebration and thanksgiving."

Bishop Bergie has been active in the cemetery ministry throughout his priestly life. He was co-presenter with Past President John O'Brien at the 2002 CANA convention in Toronto, offering a perspective on Catholic cremation practices. He has been a valuable contributor to legislative initiatives on behalf of the Ontario Catholic Cemetery Conference prior to the adoption of the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act by the Government of Ontario. He has acted as Master of Ceremonies for countless annual cemetery memorial masses and is a regular celebrant at the monthly memorial mass at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Burlington.

Bishop Bergie's duties will include assisting Bishop Tonnos in the administration of the sacramental life of the Diocese, especially in the celebration of confirmation, as well as continuing in his role as Chancellor.

The Diocese of Hamilton includes 121 parishes and is the second largest English speaking Diocese in Canada with a population of 680,000 Catholics.