



Most Reverend Robert W. Finn
Bishop
Diocese Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

Statement of
Bishop-Elect Robert W. Finn
on being named
Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph
Kansas City, Missouri - March 9, 2004

Today our Holy Father Pope John Paul II has given me a new home. I am somewhat overwhelmed but very grateful for the Pope's appointment of me as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. I give thanks to God for this great gift. It is good to be here.

Bishop Raymond Boland has extended such a warm welcome to me already. I can see he is a good and gifted shepherd. I look forward to working with him, and assisting him as he continues to fulfill his responsibilities as bishop of this diocese.

Bishop Boland and his leadership team have begun to tell me about the history and initiatives of this great local Church, and their enthusiasm has made me even more eager to be with you. I have much to learn about the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Our mutual love for Our Lord and His Church will make that which seems so challenging now, not only possible, but a joy.

I want to meet you often in our cathedral when we come to praise and implore the Lord of Mercies. And I want to be with you also in your parishes, schools, religious houses, and diocesan offices. Together you and I - the bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, parish leaders and all the faithful of Kansas City-St. Joseph - will give ourselves to the work of the New Evangelization. With confidence and persistence we will proclaim the Gospel of life and safeguard the centrality and holiness of marriage and the family. In a similar way I am anxious to participate in the strong heritage of Catholic education and the ministry of charity so vibrant here for so long.

My brother priests, you mean very much to me. I want to get to know you and want you to get to know me. Our priesthood is a sacred bond and fraternity that Jesus Christ the High Priest has established around the bishop. We need each other in order to grow in holiness of life, to care for the pressing needs of the People of God, and to foster vocations to the priesthood. Let us never grow tired of doing good, brothers.

For my dear brother priests and parishioners and friends in St. Louis, I also give heartfelt thanks to God today. They have supported me in my vocation, inspired me by their faith, and taught me so much about the sacrifice that our love in Christ requires. I ask their continued prayers for me, and now also for the Church in Kansas City-St. Joseph. Archbishop Raymond Burke, so recently my ordinary in St. Louis, and his predecessors and auxiliary bishops have been wonderful to me, and it is a consolation that I will retain Archbishop Burke's guidance and support as Metropolitan Archbishop.

I am particularly mindful at this moment of my family: my late parents Theodore and Betty Finn,

my sisters Kathy, Patti, and Nancy, and my brother Richard, my nieces and nephews. No one could have better teachers and companions than I have in you. You are with me in a special way. I thank the Holy Father for honoring you in choosing me.

The journey of my appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph begins in March, the month of St. Joseph, Guardian of the Redeemer, and will reach a certain fulfillment in my ordination to the episcopacy on the Feast of the Apostles Philip and James, May 3, during the month of Mary, our Mother and Queen. In the intervening weeks, though we will not be physically together, we will be united in a very special way – across Missouri – in the commemoration of the Lord's passion, death and resurrection – the focus of this Lent and Easter time. These sacred mysteries are at the heart of our life in Christ, and I look forward to what I pray will be many years celebrating them together.

Dear friends, my new family, please pray for me as I pray for you.