



Press release
For immediate release

Episcopal Resignation and Appointment for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg

OTTAWA, 30 December 2024 – Today, His Holiness Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of the Most Reverend Richard Gagnon as Archbishop of Winnipeg, and appointed the Most Reverend Murray Chatlain, currently Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas, as his successor.

Born on 19 January 1963, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Archbishop Murray Chatlain was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Saskatoon on 15 May 1987. Throughout his early years of priestly ministry, he served in various pastoral and chaplaincy roles, beginning as an assistant priest at St. Paul's Cathedral and other parishes within the Diocese of Saskatoon. Over the years, he served in Martensville, Kindersley, and in remote communities in the Diocese of MacKenzie-Fort Smith, focusing on pastoral care in northern Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

Archbishop Chatlain holds a degree in Philosophy from the University of Saskatoon, a Master of Divinity from St. Peter's Seminary, and has also studied the Dene language, demonstrating his commitment to serving northern Indigenous communities.

On 23 June 2007, he was appointed Coadjutor Bishop of MacKenzie-Fort Smith and was ordained on 14 September 2007. A year later, on 12 May 2008, he became the Titular Bishop of MacKenzie-Fort Smith. During his tenure, he was instrumental in the pastoral outreach to Indigenous communities in the north. His commitment to linguistic and cultural immersion led him to study the Dene language at La Loche, Saskatchewan, from 2000 to 2001.

On 6 December 2012, he was appointed Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas, serving the faithful of Manitoba's northern dioceses.

Archbishop Chatlain has also served in various leadership roles within the Canadian Church. From 2008 to 2014, he served as a representative on the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council, addressing the pastoral needs of Indigenous communities. He served on the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace (2014-2017), chaired the Northern Dioceses (2016), and also chaired the *Ad hoc* Committee on the Transition of the Northern Dioceses. He represented the Northern Dioceses on the Catholic coalition of Indigenous people, Our Lady of Guadalupe Circle, from 2016 to 2017 and later served as the CCCB Representative and Co-Chair of the said Circle in 2018. In 2020, he was elected President of the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops (AWCB), further solidifying his leadership within the Canadian Church.

Archbishop Richard Gagnon was born on 17 June 1948, in Lethbridge, Alberta. He was ordained to the priesthood on 24 June 1983, by Archbishop James Carney at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver, British Columbia. After several years of pastoral work, he was appointed Bishop of Victoria (British Columbia) on 14 May 2004, and ordained by Archbishop Raymond Roussin at St. Andrew's Cathedral, in Victoria, on 20 July 2004. He later was appointed Archbishop of Winnipeg (Manitoba) on 28 October 2013 and was installed on 3 January 2014.

From 1983 to 1984, he served as Assistant in St. Mary's Parish in Vancouver and as Director of Religious Studies at Notre Dame Regional Secondary School. He continued his pastoral work in various pastoral roles, including Assistant Pastor at Corpus Christi Parish and as a spiritual advisor for the Catholic Women's League. Throughout the years, he took on leadership positions, including founding St. James Parish in Abbotsford and serving as Vicar General for the Diocese of Vancouver. In 2002, Pope John Paul II named him Prelate of Honour in recognition of his service and exemplary work. He was involved in several diocesan and national initiatives, including representing the Archbishop at St. John Brebeuf Regional Secondary School and serving on the board of St. Mark's College and Redeemer Pacific College.

Archbishop Gagnon's service extended to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), where he served in various commissions and committees. He was a member of the Episcopal Commission for Social Communications (2005-2008) and the Permanent Council (2007-2008). His contributions also included work within the Commission for Liturgy and Sacraments, the CCCB - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Working Group, and the Bishops' Working Group on Indigenous Initiatives. From 2019 to 2021, he served as the President of the CCCB. Archbishop Gagnon has also been involved in ongoing efforts to promote responsible ministry and the protection of minors and vulnerable persons, playing an integral role in shaping the Church's response to critical issues.

The Archdiocese of Winnipeg has 58 diocesan priests, 13 priests who are members of religious orders and societies of apostolic life, 19 religious Brothers and Sisters, 20 permanent deacons serving a Catholic population of 162,276 in 88 parishes and missions.

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