



## DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

• P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003 •

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—JULY 23, 2019**

### **Pope Francis Announces Appointment of Bishop Mark E. Brennan As Ninth Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia**

WHEELING, W.Va.— Pope Francis has named the Most Reverend Mark E. Brennan, currently Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, as the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Bishop Brennan, 72, was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington on May 15, 1976 by the then-Archbishop William W. Baum.

A Boston native, Bishop Brennan is the son of the late Edward Charles Brennan and Regina Claire Lonsway. He attended public schools in Massachusetts and Maryland before entering St. Anthony High School in Washington, D.C. Bishop Brennan graduated from Brown University in 1969 with a degree in history, and then entered Christ the King Seminary in Alleghany, New York for a year of philosophy before attending the Pontifical North American College in Rome for his theological studies.

A parish priest for nearly his entire career, Bishop Brennan was assigned to Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Potomac, MD, from 1976-81; St. Pius X Parish in Bowie, MD, from 1981-85; St. Bartholomew Parish in Bethesda, MD, from 1986-88; St. Thomas Apostle Parish in Washington, D.C., from 1998-2003; St. Martin of Tours Parish in Gaithersburg, MD from 2003-16. Bishop Brennan attended Spanish Language courses and Hispanic cultural studies in the Dominican Republic and in Colombia from 1985-86. From 1988 to 1998, Bishop Brennan was the Director of Priestly Vocations in the Archdiocese of Washington. He was appointed Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Baltimore on Dec. 5, 2016, and ordained on Jan. 19, 2017.

“I am deeply honored to be appointed the new bishop of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese and am grateful to the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for his confidence in me to now lead the Catholic faithful here in West Virginia in a spirit of true Christian service,” said Bishop Brennan. “As my parents both retired to this great State a number of years ago, I am no stranger and, in fact, a great admirer of the beauty of its landscape and people. It will be my first priority to meet and get to know the good people across this diocese who are working each and every day to make lives better, to lift those who are suffering and in need of comfort, support and hope, and through their determined actions, living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even as we work toward bringing about true healing and renewal here in this local Church - work begun so well by Archbishop William Lori - I am full of hope and confidence

for what we can accomplish together. There is immense need which is matched by immense desire and determination to reinvigorate the Church here in West Virginia and across our nation. As your brother and servant, I look forward to soon being back with you and to the joy of living and working among you.”

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, which includes nearly 75,000 Catholics, 95 parishes and 34 smaller missions and chapels, encompasses the entire state of West Virginia. Currently, there are approximately 250 diocesan and religious priests, women religious and religious brothers, in addition to 25 primary and secondary Catholic schools, serving roughly 7000 students. The Diocese also has one Catholic hospital (Wheeling Hospital) and one Catholic higher education institution (Wheeling University).

The formal installation of Bishop Brennan will take place on Thursday, August 22 at 2:00 p.m. in the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

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