



Greetings from Father Liam Cary, soon to be your new bishop.

I arrived in Bend last night (May 4th) and am sitting down at my desk here at the Pastoral Office to get to work in earnest. It has been a very hectic time since I learned February 28th that Pope Benedict had named me bishop. Never in my life have I received such a surprise, and the surprise has yet to wear off.

With Ash Wednesday only a week behind us then, the announcement could not have come at a busier time. After the press conference in Bend on March 8th, Lenten commitments to my parish in Eugene so filled my calendar that I was not able to travel to this side of the mountains again before Easter. I did spend Easter week on retreat in California and accompanied the bishops of the Northwest to Rome in the last week of April for the *Ad Limina* visit with Pope Benedict, which Bishop Skylstad wrote about in the last *Chronicle*. The intervening weeks found me packing my belongings and disengaging from a much loved parish. Now I come home to Central/Eastern Oregon, ready to take up this new work to which the Lord calls me.

For the past thirteen years I have served quite happily as a pastor in two busy parishes in Medford and Eugene. My attention has been focused on the local level. As bishop I will have to enlarge my vision to encompass all the parishes of the

diocese, not just my own. So it will be essential, first of all, to draw on the wisdom, experience, and dedication of the priests of the diocese and all those who assist them in parish ministry.

As a successor to the Apostles, I will need to collaborate with brother bishops in the Northwest and in the nation to help build up the Catholic Church in the United States and to foster international unity with bishops everywhere through our common bond with the Bishop of Rome. That is why I so value the opportunity to take part in the *Ad Limina* visit at the very beginning of my ministry as bishop. Almost overnight, this journey to the tombs of the Apostles expanded my outlook on the Church, for in one week I made personal connections on the regional, national, and international levels. Now those Northwest bishops who lay hands on me at my ordination will come, not as strangers, but as brothers. I will not forget standing in prayer with them at the tombs of Peter and Paul and John Paul II and sitting with them in the company of Benedict XVI. The Holy Father proved to be the gentle, gracious man I had heard he would be. I can still feel the uplifting force of his kind, fatherly gaze.

May God give me the grace to look upon you in the same way as I come among you as your bishop. I very much look forward to meeting you and learning from you how best I may serve you as we build up God's Church in love.