

Office of Communications

MARCH 9, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MONSIGNOR ROBERT W. FINN NAMED COADJUTOR BISHOP OF KANSAS CITY–ST. JOSEPH

Will Begin Service in Western Missouri Diocese in May

ST. LOUIS — Pope John Paul II announced at noon today in Rome (5 a.m. CST) that the Reverend Monsignor Robert W. Finn, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, has been named Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph, Missouri, which currently is headed by Bishop Raymond J. Boland.

Under Canon Law — the body of precepts and norms that governs the legal proceedings of the Roman Catholic Church — a coadjutor is appointed by the pope to assist the current bishop of a diocese until that person retires because of age or illness. Upon the retirement of the resident bishop, the coadjutor automatically becomes the resident bishop. According to Church law, a bishop is requested to present to the pope his resignation from office at the age of 75. Bishop Boland marked his 72nd birthday on February 8 of this year.

Monsignor Finn will be ordained to the episcopacy on May 3, 2004, in a ceremony at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Kansas City, Missouri, and will subsequently begin his service there. The attached statements from Monsignor Finn and Archbishop Raymond Burke address the appointment. Also attached is a curriculum vitae for Monsignor Finn.

**Statement of Bishop-Elect Robert W. Finn
On His Appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph**

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; my brother, Richard; and 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.

**Statement of Archbishop Raymond L. Burke
On the Appointment of the Reverend Monsignor Robert W. Finn
As Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph**

Today, our Holy Father Pope John Paul II has named the Reverend Monsignor Robert W. Finn, priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and Editor of the *St. Louis Review*, to the office of Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph. The Archdiocese of St. Louis is deeply honored to have one of its distinguished priests selected by our Holy Father for the office of Bishop. As Archbishop of St. Louis, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Bishop-elect Finn. I also congratulate the Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland, Bishop of Kansas City–St. Joseph, and the faithful of the Diocese.

The Church in the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph is blessed to receive Bishop-elect Finn as Coadjutor Bishop. Bishop-elect Finn is known for his pastoral charity, the soundness of his teaching, and the excellence of his communication skills. He has given distinguished service as Editor of the *St. Louis Review*. During the months since the announcement of my appointment as Archbishop of St. Louis, I have come to know Bishop-elect Finn's outstanding priestly qualities and have been blessed to work with him in the apostolate of the Catholic press. Because of my esteem for Bishop-elect Finn, I had recently appointed him to the office of Rector of the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis. I am deeply grateful to him for the assistance which he has given to me in my first weeks of service in the Archdiocese. While I am very sorry to lose his immediate collaboration here, I am happy that he will remain in the Province of St. Louis and am most confident that he will fulfill the weighty responsibilities of his new office in the Church with great distinction.

Bishop-elect Finn will be missed very much by the priests and all the faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. I assure him of my prayers and of the prayers of the faithful of the Archdiocese as he prepares to take up his new mission in the Church. May God grant him many and happy years as a true shepherd of His flock in the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph.

Reverend Monsignor Robert W. Finn
Coadjutor Bishop-elect, Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph

Curriculum Vitae

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 2, 1953, the second of the five children of the late Theodore (Pat) and Betty Finn (née Schneider).

Family members: three sisters and one brother — Mrs. Kathleen Fornwalt (Chesterfield, MO); Mrs. Patricia Bax (St. Charles, MO); Mrs. Nancy Meyer (Maryland Heights, MO); Richard Finn (Keller, TX).

Attended All Souls Catholic Elementary School, Overland; St. Louis Preparatory Seminary North High School (graduated 1971); and Cardinal Glennon College (Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, 1975).

Undertook studies for ordination at the North American College in Rome, earning a Master of Arts in Theology from the Angelicum University in 1979.

Served his diaconate assignment (1978-1979) at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Ogle Street, in the Archdiocese of Westminster, England.

Ordained a priest by Bishop John N. Wurm at All Souls Parish Church on July 7, 1979.

Named associate pastor of St. Timothy Parish, Affton (1979-1982), and associate pastor at Holy Infant Parish, Ballwin (1982).

In 1983, assigned to teach at St. Francis Borgia Regional High School, Washington, with residence at Immaculate Conception Parish, Union. In 1986, appointed part-time associate at St. John Parish, Villa Ridge, and continued full-time at St. Francis Borgia until 1989.

In 1989, upon completion of Master of Arts in Education Administration from St. Louis University, appointed Administrator of St. Dominic High School, O’Fallon, and assigned to assist the pastor of All Saints Parish, St. Peters. Transferred in 1990 to Assumption Parish, O’Fallon, and also served as part-time chaplain to the Most Precious Blood Motherhouse in O’Fallon. Continued at St. Dominic High School until July 1996.

In July 1996, appointed Director of Continuing Formation of Priests (CFP), with residence at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Florissant. Transferred in 1998 to Our Holy Redeemer Parish, Webster Groves. Named editor of the *St. Louis Review* in December 1999, and continued as Director of CFP until June 2000.

Named a “Chaplain to His Holiness,” with the title of Monsignor, on August 24, 2003.

Named Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph, Missouri, on March 9, 2004.

Has also served as a member of the St. Charles County Committee on Education (1990-1996); St. Louis Archdiocesan Council of Priests (1996-2000); St. Louis Archdiocesan Millennium Jubilee Committee (1996-2000); United States Bishops National Advisory Council (1997-2001); Archdiocesan Curia (1998-present); Archdiocesan Committee on the Diaconate (1998-present); and Archdiocesan Board of Consultants (2000-present).