

Baltimore native named auxiliary bishop of Washington

WASHINGTON — Pope Francis has appointed a Baltimore native who grew up across the street from Memorial Stadium as an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Washington.

The new Washington auxiliary, Bishop-designate Michael W. Fisher, 60, has served the archdiocese as episcopal vicar for clergy and secretary for ministerial leadership since 2006.

The appointment was announced June 8 in Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican nuncio to the United States. The archbishop also announced the appointment of Bishop-designate Richard G. Henning, 53, rector of Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York, as an auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Center, New York.

“Monsignor Fisher brings to this ministry recognized talent and demonstrated ability,” Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said in a statement. “In particular, his concern for his brother priests, dedication to priestly ministry and his kind yet directive leadership will be gifts to this local church as he serves in this new capacity.”

Cardinal Wuerl announced that Bishop-designate Fisher’s episcopal ordination will take place June 29, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Bishop-designate Henning’s episcopal ordination for Rockville Centre will be July 24.

Born in Baltimore, Bishop-designate Fisher was baptized at St. Anthony of Padua, Baltimore, and later attended the Church of the Annunciation, Rosedale. In a 2006 interview with the Catholic Review, he spoke of his love for the Baltimore Orioles — an allegiance he maintained even after the Nationals brought major league baseball back to Washington.

“The one good thing about the Nationals is that they are run by one of the greatest

Orioles of all time, Frank Robinson,” Bishop-designate Fisher told the Review, referencing then-Washington manager Robinson, a Hall of Fame outfielder for the Orioles.

Since 2006 to present, Bishop-designate Fisher has served as vicar for clergy and secretary for ministerial leadership for the Washington Archdiocese. He also serves on the Redemptoris Mater Seminary Pastoral Council.

Bishop-designate Fisher was ordained a priest for the Washington archdiocese June 23, 1990. He has a bachelor of science degree in accounting (1985) from the University of Maryland in College Park and has a master of divinity degree and a master’s in church history (1990) from Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg.

Born Oct. 17, 1964, in Rockville Centre, Bishop-designate Henning was ordained for the diocese May 30, 1992, at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre. He has a bachelor of arts in history (1986) and a master of arts in history (1988) from St. John University in New York.

He attended the seminary where he now serves as rector. He has licentiates in biblical theology from, respectively, The Catholic University of America in Washington (2000) and the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, or the Angelicum, in Rome (2007).

In Rockville Centre, Bishop John O. Barres said the diocese “rejoices” over the appointment of Bishop-designate Henning, whom he praised for, among other things, his “pastoral charity and intelligence, his commitment to a demanding life of daily prayer (and) his love for the Hispanic community and evangelization.”

The Archdiocese of Washington covers about 2,100 square miles and is comprised of the District of Columbia and Montgomery, Prince George’s, St. Mary’s, Calvert and Charles counties in Maryland. Out of a total population of over 2.9 million, about 655,000 people, or 22 percent of the population, are Catholic.

The Diocese of Rockville Centre, which covers close to 1,200 square miles, has a Catholic population of over 1.5 million, or 52 percent of a total population of close to 2.9 million.

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