

# **Bishop DiLorenzo “cheerfully did whatever the church asked of him,” Archbishop Lori says**

Archbishop William E. Lori remembered Richmond Bishop Francis Xavier DiLorenzo as a “good moral theologian,” an “excellent seminary rector” and a bishop who “cheerfully did whatever the church asked of him.”

Bishop DiLorenzo, spiritual shepherd of the Diocese of Richmond, Va., since 2004, died Aug. 17 at age 75, according to an announcement on the Richmond diocesan website.

Archbishop Lori knew Bishop DiLorenzo since the late 1980s, when Bishop DiLorenzo was named auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, Pa.

Before coming to Richmond, Bishop DiLorenzo served as the apostolic administrator and then bishop of the Diocese of Honolulu.

“He had a personality that was larger than life,” said Archbishop Lori, who had worked with Bishop DiLorenzo more closely in the last five years after being named archbishop of Baltimore. The Diocese of Richmond is part of the Province of Baltimore.

“He had a wonderful sense of humor,” Archbishop Lori said. “He was a realist who understood how to face difficult situations, but he always brought good things out of these situations.”

Archbishop Lori recalled that when he heard his friend’s health was not well earlier this month, he called him.

“He said, ‘You know, I looked over my medical record and found I had never had viral pneumonia before,’” Archbishop Lori recalled. “He said, ‘I thought I had better have that at this time in my life, and so that’s what I got.’”

Even a serious illness was taken in stride and “with a lot of humor,” Archbishop Lori said.

“You also had this sense that there was a great warmth of personality there and a great understanding of human nature,” the archbishop added.

Born in Philadelphia, Bishop DiLorenzo was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia by Cardinal John Krol in 1968. He served in the Philadelphia Archdiocese in pastoral and educational assignments from 1968 to 1971.

In Rome, he earned a license in sacred theology in 1973 from the Academia Alphonsiana and a doctorate in sacred theology in 1975 from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum).

Bishop DiLorenzo served as chaplain and instructor in theology at St. Pius X High School, Pottstown, from 1975 to 1977. In 1977, he was appointed chaplain and associate professor of moral theology at Immaculata College.

In 1983, he became vice rector of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, becoming rector two years later.

Bishop DiLorenzo was appointed Titular Bishop of Tigia and Auxiliary Bishop of Scranton in 1988. Five years later he was appointed apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Honolulu. On Oct. 4 1994, he became the bishop of Honolulu.

According to the Diocese of Richmond, Bishop DiLorenzo was nominated by the pope as a participant in the 1998 Synod of Bishops for Asia. At the synod, he encouraged more collaboration between Asian and U.S. bishops to serve the growing needs of Catholic Asian immigrants in the United States.

Bishop DiLorenzo was one of the first to call for peace during the chaos- and hate-filled weekend in Charlottesville, when white supremacists holding a rally clashed with counterprotesters Aug. 11 and 12. The events led to the deaths of three people and injuries to more than 19 others. His first statement Aug. 11 was followed by a second one the next day.

"In the last 24 hours, hatred and violence have been on display in the city of Charlottesville," Bishop DiLorenzo said. "I earnestly pray for peace."

In a statement about Bishop DiLorenzo's passing, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington said that over the years he knew Bishop DiLorenzo "as a devoted man of God."

"He has always been highly regarded for his firm grasp of the church's moral teaching and as a pastoral leader," he said in a statement. "We share the bond of having been ordained priests of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and of serving as rector of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. He will be dearly missed."

"During my tenure in the Diocese of Arlington, it has been a privilege to serve and collaborate with him," said the bishop, who was installed to head the Northern Virginia diocese last December. Before that, he was the Bishop of Raleigh, North Carolina.

"I respected and admired his zeal for Christ, his pastoral skills, and his administrative abilities," Bishop Burbidge said. "His joy for the Catholic faith was evident to everyone who knew him or witnessed his devoted service to God's people."

*Catholic News Service contributed to this story.*