

# **Pope Francis Appoints Archbishop William E. Lori Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston**

Thursday, September 13

BALTIMORE, MD, September 13—Following his acceptance of the letter of resignation of Bishop Michael Bransfield, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, appointed Archbishop William E. Lori Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, while remaining Archbishop of Baltimore. The Holy Father further instructed Archbishop Lori to conduct an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment of adults against Bishop Bransfield.

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is a suffragan diocese in the Metropolitan See of Baltimore.

“My primary concern is for the care and support of the priests and people of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston at this difficult time,” Archbishop Lori said. “I further pledge to conduct a thorough investigation in search of the truth into the troubling allegations against Bishop Bransfield and to work closely with the clergy, religious and lay leaders of the diocese until the appointment of a new bishop.”

Archbishop Lori, who was instructed by the Holy See to announce the forthcoming investigation, will meet with clergy and lay leaders of the Diocese today and Friday. Archbishop Lori will celebrate Mass in Wheeling on Saturday, September 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

A hotline has been established for those wishing to share any information related to this investigation. The hotline number is 1-833-272-4225.