

Statement on the Appointment of Archbishop McCarrick

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, Pope John Paul II has given us an additional reason to give thanks to the Lord with his appointment of the Most Reverend Theodore E. McCarrick as Archbishop of Washington.

At the same time, speaking in my own name and for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, I congratulate Cardinal James A. Hickey whose request for retirement the Holy Father has now accepted. For twenty wonderfully pastoral years he has shepherded the Archdiocese of Washington. Just two weeks ago many of us joined in celebrating those years of gracious and effective leadership and also his 80th birthday.

Our prayers are with Cardinal Hickey, a good neighbor and dedicated collaborator in the work of the Maryland Catholic Conference. Please God, he will continue to join us for retreats and on many other occasions. His spirit of faith, friendly smile, genuine concern for individuals and wise counsel will be blessings for his friends and for the Church.

With Cardinal Hickey I look forward to welcoming Archbishop McCarrick back to Maryland. During studies at The Catholic University of America he became familiar with Washington and that area. In recent years he has come often for meetings of the Catholic University Board and of other committees and commissions on which he serves.

Archbishop McCarrick has visited Baltimore as well, participating in our 200th anniversary celebration in 1989 and returning for the episcopal ordination of Bishop Gordon Bennett, and for other events. A dear friend and collaborator for many years, he brings gifts of great faith, diligence and energy to his new assignment.

Over the years Archbishop McCarrick has shown a special concern for causes of justice and peace and for the needs of the poor in distant lands as well as in our own. The Holy Father is sending to the Archdiocese of Washington a seasoned and committed pastoral leader. With our congratulations to him go also our prayers for

the blessing of the Holy Spirit on his ministry in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Cardinal William H. Keeler

Archbishop of Baltimore