

U.S. Bishops elect new secretary and chairman of Committee for Religious Liberty

Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit will be the next secretary of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, taking office next November.

Bishops voted 96-88 to elect Archbishop Vigneron Nov. 14 during their fall general assembly.

Votes also were cast for a new chairman of the bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty and chairmen-elect for the committees on Communications, Cultural Diversity in the Church, Doctrine, National Collections and Pro-Life Activities.

Archbishop Vigneron will succeed New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond, who is starting his third and final year of his three-year term. The Detroit prelate will serve one year as secretary-elect and then start a three-year term in office at the conclusion of the 2018 fall general assembly.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, was elected over Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI of Milwaukee as chairman of the Committee on Religious Liberty by a 113-86 vote. He was to assume his duties at the conclusion of the assembly.

At their spring meeting in June, the bishops voted to make what was an ad hoc religious liberty body a permanent standing committee. Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori served as chairman of the committee since its creation in 2011.

Bishops also voted for chairmen-elect of five committees. Those elected will serve for

one year before beginning three-year terms at the conclusion of the bishops' 2018 fall general assembly.

Those elected include:

- Committee on Pro-Life Activities: Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, over Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, 96-82.
- Committee on Communications: Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Virginia, over Bishop John O. Barres of Rockville Centre, New York, 116-70.
- Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church: Bishop Nelson J. Perez of Cleveland over Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, 102-77.
- Committee on Doctrine: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, over Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio, 110-95.
- Committee on National Collections: Bishop Joseph R. Cistone of Saginaw, Michigan, over Archbishop Michael O. Jackels of Dubuque, Iowa, 124-65.

Bishops also were to choose six members for the CRS board. An electronic vote was bypassed in favor of a paper ballot. Results were to be announced before the conclusion of the assembly.

Copyright ©2017 Catholic News Service/U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.