



## THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER

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### **Statement of Monsignor Jeffrey N. Steenson, Ordinary Emeritus**

November 24, 2015

What wonderful news from the Holy See this morning, that Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Steven Lopes to be the first bishop of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter for Canada and the United States!

This is the happy outcome of much careful consultation with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to whom I first made this request almost a year ago. I welcome this news with all my heart, for the Ordinariate has now progressed to the point where a bishop is much needed for our life and mission. A bishop will help to give the Ordinariate the stability and permanence necessary to fulfil its mission to be a work of Catholic unity, whose roots are to be found in the great texts of the Second Vatican Council.

That the Ordinariate would ultimately be headed by a bishop has been the intention of *Anglicanorum coetibus*, the apostolic constitution under which we were established in 2012. It is indeed an encouraging sign that we have reached that goal. With the inauguration of our new missal, *Divine Worship*, on the first Sunday of Advent, the time seems especially propitious.

It was on the occasion of my reception into the Catholic Church in 2007 when I first met Msgr. Lopes, and we have worked closely together ever since. There is no one who knows better the work of the Pastoral Provision and the Ordinariates: those entities created in response to Anglicans seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. Msgr. Lopes has been deeply involved the *Anglicanae Traditiones* Commission, charged with identifying “that liturgical expression which has nourished and maintained Catholic faith amongst Anglicans throughout the period of ecclesial separation and which in these days has given rise to aspirations for full communion with the Catholic Church.” He is thus uniquely qualified to be our first bishop.

It is particularly noteworthy that the Holy Father’s appointment is the culmination of a process for selecting an ordinary laid out in Article IV of the Complementary Norms of *Anglicanorum coetibus*. This provides for a significant consultative process that begins with the Governing Council of the Ordinariate presenting a terna of candidates. I am grateful to the members of the Governing Council, who accomplished this task with discernment and discretion.

I am grateful, too, for the encouragement, wise counsel, and support of the members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops during these first four years of the Ordinariate’s existence. I will always treasure the friendships made with these bishops. Their warm welcome for us pilgrims has certainly deepened the joy we know as Catholics.

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