

Statement of Archbishop Hanus on the appointment of Archbishop Jackels

As many of you know, my health has declined in recent years. As a result, some time ago I submitted my resignation as Archbishop to the proper authorities.

In a recent telephone conversation, the Pope's representative in the United States, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, informed me that our Holy Father, Pope Francis, had accepted my resignation and appointed as the next Archbishop of Dubuque, the Most Rev. Michael O. Jackels, currently Bishop of Wichita, Kansas. My immediate response to the selection of him as my successor was: "I am thrilled."

For eight years, Archbishop Jackels has served faithfully and effectively as the Bishop of Wichita. His experience will serve him well here in Northeast Iowa. Wichita and Dubuque are similar in many ways. I think initially of the commitment to Catholic schools and all forms of Catholic education. The Diocese of Wichita is known as the premier diocese in its practice of stewardship: the entire membership supports parents in their choice of Catholic education.

Support of Church vocations and especially encouragement of seminarians have characterized his ministry as bishop. I am sure that Archbishop Jackels will be a great leader in this regard.

Both of our dioceses are undergoing massive changes in agriculture, population, diversity, and economics. Our new Archbishop is no stranger to these challenges which characterize the Midwest. He will bring new energy and insights as we move toward the future.

I am so grateful to Pope Francis for accepting my resignation and for appointing Archbishop Jackels. I had explained my situation in a letter to Pope Benedict XVI last year. In the months since then, my health has deteriorated further. With the resignation and the election of the Popes, I had feared that a decision might be significantly delayed. So I am grateful to the Holy Father and to those who advise him. They know that the Archdiocese of Dubuque needs an Archbishop who can devote full energy and attention in providing pastoral leadership. Praise God, we shall have that.

Thank you, Archbishop Michael O. Jackels, for accepting this appointment. I assure you that you will receive a warm welcome from the clergy, religious, and laity of the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

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