



## THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

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### STATEMENT

DATE: January 31, 2019

RE: Announcement of Bishop-Designate Robert Brennan's Appointment to the Diocese of Columbus

FROM: Most Reverend Robert Brennan

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Driving on the Long Island Expressway on Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup> I received a call from Archbishop Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio, with the happy news that the Holy Father had appointed me Bishop of Columbus. [He asked me if I was alone, then if I needed to pull over!] I was going from one event to another and leaving the next morning for World Youth Day in Panama. [It was a little warmer there than we have it here today!]

World Youth Day was incredible, being with the Holy Father and 700,000 young people from around the world. There was such exuberance and great faith. Along the streets of Panama City one could see group after group of young pilgrims. Inevitably, one or two people would lead the group waving large flags. There would be joyful singing and cheers. Groups would cry out to one another. It was amazing to watch and uplifting to walk in the midst of a group making their way. Looking more closely, you might see how within the groups people traded pins and stickers, and helped and encouraged one another on the way, especially when it became long or difficult. [At one point, a crowd of people awaiting the Holy Father to pass by in the Pope Mobile actually lifted up a fellow in a wheel chair so that he might see. That image created a great storm on social media.] It was all about connection, encounter: encounter with pilgrims around the world, encounter with the Holy Father, and encounter with Jesus Christ Himself.

Looking through the lens of the new call of the Lord for me, I was struck by the image: People of faith and hope, walking together encouraging one another with the "Joy of the Gospel", helping one another on the way, leading each other to the encounter with Jesus Christ. Isn't that what we are all about?

It makes me incredibly happy to walk this journey with you, to lead the Church of Columbus, to serve as your Pastor. Until this week, I didn't really know Bishop Campbell all that well. But I have already experienced his great kindness and really look forward to being part of what he has built here with you in the Diocese of Columbus. Bishop Campbell – I am tremendously grateful. Clearly I have an awful lot to learn - I assure you. [Yes, I have looked at the website once or twice!] And I must confess I am more than a little nervous. But I look forward to walking the journey with you as your pastor sharing the "Joy of the Gospel" and the "Splendor of Truth". And if we can laugh, and sing and raise our voices in praise of God along the way, then all the better. I am already praying fervently for the Church of Columbus every day. May I humbly ask your prayers for me.