



EARLIER THIS MORNING, *Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes*, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, announced the appointment of **Most Reverend Francis Leo**, until now, Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal, as the **Archbishop of Toronto**. Archbishop Leo succeeds His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins, whose resignation the Pope also accepted. Archbishop Leo is well prepared for his new responsibilities, having served as a Parish Priest in Montreal, as a seminary formator, a university lecturer, a member of the Diplomatic Corps of the Holy See, and as General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In his new position, the Archbishop is also the *Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Toronto*, which includes the Dioceses of Hamilton, London, St. Catharines and Thunder Bay. We pray for Archbishop Leo as he prepares for his installation in the coming weeks. We look forward to welcoming him when he visits our Diocese. We will have an opportunity to thank and honour His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins, at the Mass of Christ, on April 3rd, when we will acknowledge the 50th Anniversary of his Ordination as a Priest of the Diocese of Hamilton.

Biography of the Most Rev. Francis (Frank) Leo

Born in Montréal in 1971 to Italian immigrant parents Francesco Leo and †Rosa Valente, Most Rev. Francis Leo attended Eugenio Pacelli Elementary School, John F. Kennedy High School and CEGEP Vanier. He entered the *Grand Séminaire de Montréal* in 1990 and was ordained a priest for service to the Archdiocese of Montreal on 14 December 1996. He served in parish assignments in Montréal (assistant pastor at Our Lady of Consolata, parochial administrator of Saint-Joseph-de-RDP, and pastor of Saint-Raymond-de-Peñafort) until 2006 when he accepted the invitation to enroll in the *Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy* in Rome and subsequently enter the Diplomatic Service of the Holy See (2006-2012), serving in different Apostolic Nunciatures across the globe. On 9 January 2012, Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Chaplain of His Holiness, bestowing the title of *Monsignor*.

Upon his return to Canada, he joined the formation team of the *Grand Séminaire de Montréal*, teaching theology and philosophy while providing spiritual direction, formation and accompaniment to the candidates for the priesthood. In the fall of 2015 he was appointed General Secretary of the *Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops* (CCCB), a mandate which came to an end in the fall of 2021. As of 1 February 2022, Msgr. Leo was named Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia of the Archdiocese of Montréal.

On 16 July 2022 Pope Francis appointed him Titular Bishop of Tamada and Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal. The Episcopal consecration took place in the Cathedral Basilica of Montreal, Mary Queen of the World on 12 September 2022. **On 11 February 2023, His Holiness appointed him Archbishop of Toronto.**

In addition to his extensive graduate studies in Canon Law (Pontifical Lateran University), Diplomacy and International Law, Bishop Leo holds a Doctorate in Systematic Theology (University of Dayton/IMRI) with a specialization in Mariology, a Licentiate in Philosophy (Pontifical Lateran University), a Diploma in Classical Studies (Université de Montréal) and a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction (Aquinas Institute of Theology). He worked as a Judge for the Canadian Appeal Tribunal and has taught theology, spirituality and philosophy at Montreal, Canberra (Australia), Dayton (USA) and Ottawa, among other places. He speaks English, French, Italian and Spanish. Bishop Leo is President and founding member of the Canadian Mariological Society, Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem as well as a member of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Dominic (Third Order Dominican).

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.

Ex corde, †Douglas, OMI