



Bishop: Journey together with Christ

Editor's note: The following is the text of Bishop Etienne's remarks in his Ordination Mass.

Dear Family & Friends in Christ:

First of all, I wish to thank Cardinal Mahoney for his presence here today. He was curious what this white stuff was, so we are glad he could get a good first hand experience of snow! Thanks also to Archbishop Sambini, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. Archbishop, we are truly pleased to have you here with us today.

Thanks also to all my brother bishops who made the extra effort to be here today. I am very humbled by your presence and support. Especially, I wish to thank Archbishop Chaput, Archbishop Buechlein, and Bishop Ricken for your role as consecrating bishops today. Your presence is greatly appreciated! Also, a very special thanks to Bishop Lynch for serving as our homilist today. Well done, my good and faithful friend. I know this journey took a great deal of extra effort, and just goes to show why your Episcopal motto is "For His Friends." God bless you, and we are glad to see you here.

Special thanks to my family. Without their love and support over the years, this day would never have come to pass. I would like for all of you to meet my parents – Mom and Dad, would you please stand? I love you!

I won't call the rest of the family by name, but I want each of you to know how much it means to me that you made the effort to be here today, and to have you with me at this moment. Thank you, and know of my love for each of you.

Thanks to all the friends who traveled such distances to be present for this significant moment in my life and the life of this local church. It is good to see you, and even better to pray with you here today! Thank you for the gift of your presence and love.

Now, allow me to



Above - Bishop Paul D. Etienne greets Bishop Robert M. Lynch during his ordination Mass at the Cheyenne Civic Center. Bishop Lynch gave a heartfelt and humorous homily at the episcopal ordination of his longtime friend.

Right - A crowd of clergy from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Cheyenne watch Newly-ordained Bishop Etienne processing through the Cheyenne Civic Center while greeting the faithful of Wyoming. Photos by James Baca

speak to my new family and spouse – the People of God of the Diocese of Cheyenne. Truly, as we have seen and heard in this ordination rite today, I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. I embrace you with a pastor's heart, freshly filled with the grace and love of Jesus Christ. My brother priests

and deacons, religious men and women and seminarians, all who labor with us in the vineyard of the LORD, families, single, young and young at heart, people of every walk of life.

In the words of St. Paul to the Philippians, "we are partners for the gospel." Together, we

will continue our journey of faith, furthering the Kingdom of God one holy life at a time.

Most of you know I've been a priest now just seventeen and a half years. During the course of ministry of these years, numerous people told me, "You cannot please everybody," or "You

cannot be all things to all people." Recently, I've been reading the Church documents on what it is to be a bishop. As I read these documents, it sounds a whole lot like the bishop is to be all things to all people. Now, in the simple world of logic, if we put those two statements into a syllogism, the logical conclusion would be: "it is impossible to be a bishop!"

However, the many marvelous notes of congratulations and encouragement I have received from my brother bishops in the past seven weeks tell me quite the opposite! The reason it is possible to be a bishop is because we are called by Christ, and are sustained by his grace. As St. Paul tells us: "Glory be to Him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine." (Ephesians 3:20)

My dear people, today, we begin a journey together. In many ways, we are like the first two disciples, who heard John the Baptist exclaim: "Behold, there is the Lamb of God." Hearing this, they began to follow Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following him

where does Jesus live? Surely, where Jesus 'lives', is with the Father.

This is our journey, to discover where Jesus lives, in the intimate communion of love that is the Trinity. In our journey to discover Christ, we go to prayer, we come together to celebrate the Eucharist, we study His Word in Sacred Scripture. We should not be bashful about asking Jesus in these moments of prayer to show us where He lives with the Father, in the communion of love that is the Holy Trinity. And as we ask Him to reveal this dwelling place to us, we should also be bold enough to ask Him to take us there, that we, too, may enter into this intimate communion of love.

Part of what the disciples learned about Jesus and His intimate love with the Father is that He also spent a great deal of time with the people. This teaches us that our journey to know where Christ lives cannot be an interior, subjective journey alone. As we are committed to prayer and sacrament, so we must be committed to the great commandment of Christ to love our neighbor. In our service to the poor and marginalized, we not only make Christ present to others, but discover the profound truth that it is in giving that we receive. My desire as your bishop will also be to spend time with you, to discover Christ in your midst, as I seek to be the presence of Christ for you.

This is God's desire for us, and together we will seek this divine dwelling place, for we are His people, the people redeemed by Christ for such communion. Together, we will follow Jesus, all the days of our life, so as to live with Him for all eternity in the household of God, which is the Kingdom of Heaven. My dear family and friends, let our great journey of faith together begin. Together, may we grow into the fullness of Christ, in truth and in love.

