

5.23.23

The following remarks were offered by Bishop-elect Edward M. Lohse as he was introduced to the people of the Diocese of Kalamazoo:

To all of the people of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, hello! And greetings to you in the Lord Jesus.

Today, as fellow disciples and as brothers and sisters, we begin to share an adventure in following the Lord's call.

At the start, I would like to say that I am both humbled and honored to be asked by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, to become the fifth Bishop of Kalamazoo. I am grateful for his confidence in me and assure him of my prayers.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, to Archbishop Vigneron, Metropolitan of this Province, for their support and help leading up to this day.

And I would like to offer a special word of gratitude to Bishop Bradley, not just for his present support and encouragement which have been wonderful, but also for his tireless shepherding of this local Church over the past fourteen years. Thank you, Bishop Bradley.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Bishop Lawrence Persico of the Diocese of Erie, and to the priests, deacons, religious and laity of my home diocese. Bishop Persico has been a wonderful role model for me. I have learned much from him. I have been deeply formed and touched not only by his witness, but also by that of so many others in the Diocese of Erie who quietly, or at times not so quietly, live out their faith in Jesus. And thank you to my family for all of your love and support throughout the years.

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To all of you here in the Diocese of Kalamazoo, to the clergy and religious, to the diocesan and parish staffs, to those involved in education and formation and the works of charity and evangelization, and to the faithful who Sunday after Sunday gather to celebrate the Eucharist in each parish, I promise to give my all. No doubt, in the months and years ahead there will be moments of grace and moments of challenge. I don't have all of the answers, by any means, but let's discover them together as we discern the path forward.

Before, concluding, I'd like to offer a special word to those who speak Spanish:

¡A ustedes que hablan español, ¡pueden notar que mi español necesita mejorar! Pero me gustaría aprender de ustedes, no solo cómo hablar mejor español, sino cómo conocer mejor al Señor.

Translation: To you who speak Spanish, you can notice that my Spanish needs improvement! But I would like to learn from you all, not just how to speak Spanish better, but how to know the Lord better.

I know that the task ahead is a daunting one, but none of us walks the path of faith alone. I look forward to this journey together, and I am counting on your prayers. You will certainly be in mine. Together, we will proclaim Christ and will meet him in the hearts of all God's people here in the Diocese of Kalamazoo. We cannot know exactly what the future will hold, but we trust in the providence of God. Whatever future awaits, He will be with us.

Thank you, and God bless.