

UPDATE: Brooklyn Bishop DiMarzio retires; Columbus, Ohio, bishop is named successor

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn, New York, and named Bishop Robert J. Brennan of Columbus, Ohio, to succeed him.

Bishop DiMarzio, who has been Brooklyn's bishop since 2003, turned 77 in June. When he turned 75, he turned in his resignation to the pope as required by canon law.

Bishop Brennan, 59, is a native New Yorker who has headed the Columbus Diocese since 2019. He was born in the borough of the Bronx and raised in Lindenhurst, New York, in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, where he was an auxiliary bishop from 2012 until his appointment to Columbus.

The changes were announced in Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

A Mass of installation for Bishop Brennan will be celebrated Nov. 30 at the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Brooklyn.

"On behalf of the Diocese of Brooklyn, I welcome Bishop Brennan, whom I have known for many years, with confidence in his ability to lead our Catholic community and build upon the pastoral achievements we have made. It has truly been an honor to serve as bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn for 18 years," Bishop DiMarzio said in a statement.

"This is a historic moment for the Diocese of Brooklyn which is a very active diocese, and Bishop Brennan's energy makes him a perfect choice," he said. "I ask for God's blessings on

this transition so that the work of God, in service to his people, can effectively continue for the more than 1.2 million Catholics throughout Brooklyn and Queens.”

Bishop Brennan said he has come to know “amazing people” in the Columbus Diocese “and there is a tremendous sadness in leaving them behind.”

“As I prepare for a return to New York, I am ready and eager to embrace the people of Brooklyn and Queens as their pastor,” he said in a statement. “Knowing we are loved by Jesus, we will strive to show others his face, bearing the joy of the Gospel and the splendor of truth.”

“In the end,” he added, “that’s what it is all about – in Columbus, Brooklyn and around the world.”

Pope Francis appointed Bishop Brennan as the 12th bishop of Columbus Jan. 31, 2019, and he was installed March 29, 2019.

Among the highlights of Bishop Brennan’s time in Columbus has been the institution of the diocesan-wide “Real Presence, Real Future” evangelization and planning initiative, a two-year process involving clergy, lay ecclesial ministers, parish volunteers, and the faithful.

He traveled regularly to meet and engage people in the diocese’s 23 counties. Bishop Brennan has served on the boards of the Catholic Foundation, Mother Angeline McCrory Manor and Cristo Rey Columbus Catholic High School.

He also has been a board member and the vice chancellor of the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus.

Robert John Brennan was born June 7, 1962, to Robert and Patricia Brennan in the Bronx. He is the oldest of five children. He was raised in Lindenhurst, which is on Long Island. He attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School in Lindenhurst and St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School

in West Islip, New York.

He earned a bachelor of science degree in mathematics and computer science from St. John's University in the New York borough of Queens.

The future bishop completed his studies for the priesthood at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington, New York, and was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre May 27, 1989, by the late Bishop John R. McGann.

His first parish assignment was at the Church of St. Patrick in Smithtown, New York. In 1994, he was appointed secretary to the bishop and served three Rockville Centre bishops in that capacity.

As secretary, he lived at St. Agnes Cathedral and served at the cathedral parish. During that time he came to know the parish's Latino community and began to study Spanish.

Since those years, a particular focus of his episcopal ministry has been Latino Catholics. He has said their vibrancy of faith has been a source of inspiration to him.

He also was vicar general and moderator of the curia for the Rockville Centre Diocese and was ordained an auxiliary bishop for the diocese July 25, 2012.

On the national level, Bishop Brennan has served as a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee as well as a member of the bishops' Catholic education and priorities and plans committees.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Bishop DiMarzio was the bishop of Camden, New Jersey, from 1999 until 2003, when he was named to head the Brooklyn Diocese.

He has spent his priestly ministry of over 40 years in the areas of immigration assistance and refugee resettlement services.

Bishop DiMarzio has had a high-profile role as both an advocate for refugees and immigrant concerns in political forums, and as the initiator and administrator of programs to assist refugees and immigrants within the U.S. and throughout the world.

Before he became a bishop, then-Father DiMarzio spent six years, from 1985 to 1991, as executive director of Migration and Refugee Services for the U.S. Catholic Conference, the precursor to the USCCB.

He is chairman of the board of the Center for Migration Studies. Currently, he also is a member of the boards of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., known as CLINIC, and the Migration Policy Institute. He is a member of the USCCB migration committee; he is a former chairman of this committee.

Bishop DiMarzio also is a member of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.

From 2003 to 2005, Bishop DiMarzio served as the U.S. representative to the Global Commission on International Migration, a U.N.-sponsored commission.