

Statement of Bishop-Elect Robert Mark Pipta

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Giving thanks to God and in obedience to His will, I accept the appointment of the holy father, Francis, Pope of Rome, to serve the people of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Eparchy of Parma as their sixth bishop.

Our Lord Jesus Christ called the apostles to be guiding shepherds by sharing His gospel of love, peace, healing, true freedom, and eternal life. I ask for prayerful petitions that my response to this apostolic calling be faithful, fruitful, and steadfast.

I open myself for the grace of episcopal ordination thus enabling my ministerial work alongside the clergy of the Parma Eparchy, my prayer, fasting, and repentance with its religious, and my God-loving service to its lay faithful.

Being the heartland of our Metropolitan Church, the Eparchy of Parma exhibits its cooperation with the grace of the Holy Spirit in countless ways. Since its establishment over 50 years ago, it has shown itself a leader in return to authentic liturgical practice and has enhanced its parishes in the liturgical arts. Efforts of evangelization and outreach are notable in the eparchy, including guidance to assist college students in remaining connected to their Byzantine Catholic upbringing. I'm eager to do my part for the increase of these and many other Spirit-guided endeavors.

I look forward to a fraternal and willing association with the Council of Hierarchs of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Metropolitan Church in the United States and its strong sense of unity with our mother Church in Europe and its cooperation with other American jurisdictions.

Having served as a priest for nearly 30 years – 20 of which were spent in parochial ministry followed to present by my service as rector of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, it's with a heavy heart that I take leave of the priestly duties I've been blessed to fulfill over these past years. It's been a joy for me to serve the Seminary with the support of its Board of Directors, the gifts and friendships of its staff, the talents and sacrifices of its faculty, the fervor and hope of its students, and the generosity of its benefactors.

Confident in the prayerful support of those I've come to know during my priestly years, together with the love, goodness, and encouragement of my parents, family, and friends, I move on to my new ministry with peace and in the name of the Lord.

As I approach episcopal ordination, I sing with our Venerable Father Romanus the Melodist in his Akathist on the Mission of the Apostles: "May I obey what I preach and be the first to do what I teach."

Please pray that Christ the Good Shepherd strengthen me for this new ministerial work.

About Bishop-Elect Robert Mark Pipta

Episcopal Candidate Robert M. Pipta has served as an ordained priest in the Byzantine Catholic Church for nearly 30 years. He was born in April 1967 in Anaheim, California. Raised in southern California, he attended public schools there and completed a Bachelor of Arts program in Music at the University of California, Irvine in 1990.

He was a member of Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church in Anaheim from shortly after its founding in 1969. All of his ordinations took place at his home parish where he served at the altar from the age of six and served as a weekday cantor during his college years. He was formed for the priesthood at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from September 1990 until his priestly ordination on 21 April 1994.

As a priest of the Eparchy of Van Nuys (now Phoenix) he served Saint Stephen Pro-Cathedral (now Cathedral) in Phoenix, Arizona as parochial vicar from May 1994 until August 1997. He then served as administrator of Saint Gabriel the Archangel Church in Las Vegas, Nevada until February 2004. He served as the pastor of Holy Angels Church in San Diego, California until April 2014.

Since 1 May 2014, he has been serving as the rector of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh.

He has served on the Intereparchial Liturgy and Music Commissions and had served as Eparchial Vocations Director for over nineteen years.

Regarding his hobbies, he enjoys listening to, playing, and singing various types of music, as well as studying-up on the history and physics of manned space travel.