

Abbot Elias Appointed Bishop!

February 27, 2020

From the Very Rev. Edward Seton Fittin, O.S.B., *prior*

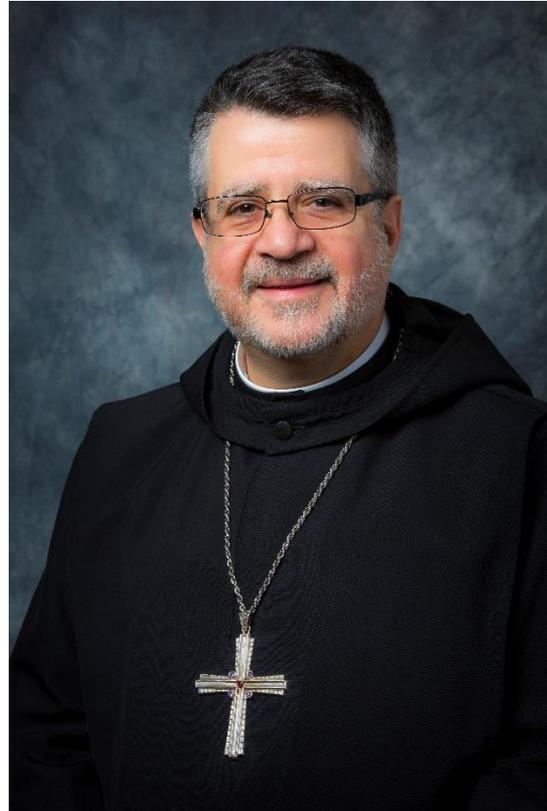
With great joy and thanks to God,

Abbot Richard Cronin and the monks of St. Mary's Abbey are delighted to announce the appointment by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, of Abbot President Elias R. Lorenzo, O.S.B. as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, and titular bishop of Tabuda. This announcement was made at noon today, by His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Tobin, C.Ss.R., metropolitan archbishop of Newark. Abbot Richard Cronin, Prior Edward Seton Fittin and Br. Paul Diveny were present for the announcement and luncheon that followed. Also present were Abbot Melvin Valvano, of Newark Abbey, and Sr. Mary Feehan, prioress of St. Walburga Monastery, Elizabeth.

Bishop-Elect Elias is one of three named as auxiliary bishops of the archdiocese, along with Reverend Michael A. Saporito, and Reverend Monsignor Gregory J. Studerus, both priests of the archdiocese of Newark. Cardinal Tobin said at the announcement: "The Holy Father gives new impetus to this local Church as we continue to walk forward in faith. I am delighted to share my responsibilities with these three dedicated missionary disciples." Auxiliary bishops support the archbishop in the pastoral care of the archdiocese. Together with Bishop Manuel Cruz, each of the auxiliary bishops will have particular responsibility for the life and mission of Church in one of the four counties that comprise the Archdiocese. A date for the episcopal ordinations is yet to be determined.

Following the Cardinal Tobin's announcement, Bishop-Elect Elias made the following statement:

"My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, in his Rule for monks, St. Benedict teaches that when a monk is presented with a new task, even if he thinks that task is impossible, trusting in God's help he must in love obey (RB 68). The task set before me today is not impossible at all, because I will have the blessing and support of so many of you. Benedictine monks have been serving side-by-side with you in parochial and educational apostolates in the Garden State since 1838. It seems Pope Francis thinks you need one more monk. Therefore, in filial devotion and obedience to His Holiness, Pope Francis, the Vicar of Christ, I have accepted this call to service. I am also encouraged to have so many good teachers and mentors in the Cardinal, Bishops, priests, consecrated women and men, and dedicated lay



faithful of this great archdiocese. As the first American Abbot Boniface Wimmer, often said, "Forward, always forward, everywhere forward!" Finally, to my family and monastic community who have nurtured and encouraged me over many years, I wish to express my sincere gratitude. With the help of so many of you, my brothers and sisters, we set out to cultivate this local vineyard in the Joy of the Gospel. Please pray for me, as I will for you. Thank you!"

Bishop-elect Elias was born in Brooklyn, where he attended St. Agatha Parish Elementary School (Sunset Park) and Cathedral Prep (Fort Green), before pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Don Bosco College Seminary in Newton, NJ. He entered Saint Mary's Abbey, Morristown, in 1983, making his first monastic profession on March 21, 1985. He was ordained a priest on June 24, 1989. Bishop-elect Elias holds a Master's degree in Liturgical Theology from St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn., a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, and a Licentiate in canon law from The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC.

Bishop-Elect Elias has more than 30 years of experience in secondary school education and administration at Delbarton School, serving as director of campus ministry, teacher and chairman of the Religious Studies Department, member of the Board of Trustees, and Vice President for Development. In the monastery, Bishop-elect Elias served as Director of Liturgy, Prior, and Rector of the Abbey Church. He also served as chairman of the Paterson Diocesan Liturgical Commission and Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Metuchen. He was canonical counsel for Praesidium, Inc. in the development of national standards to respond to the sex abuse cases, and currently serves on its advisory board.

Additionally, for the global Benedictine Confederation, Bishop-elect Elias served at the Badia Primaziale of Sant'Anselmo Rome as Prior of the monastic community, and the procurator-general. He is a founding member of the International Commission for Benedictine Education, an association of 180 secondary schools in 36 countries. In 2016, he was elected Abbot President of American Cassinese Congregation, an association of 25 Benedictine monasteries in the United States, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, and Taiwan, numbering 650 monks.

This is a great honor for the Benedictine Order, especially in the United State, and for St. Mary's Abbey, Delbarton. Bishop-elect Elias can be assured of our prayers for him. *Ad multos annos!*