

Most Reverend Michael A. Saltarelli, D.D.
Eighth Bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington



Motto: Obedience to Jesus Christ.

The Most Reverend Michael A. Saltarelli, the eighth Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, was born in Jersey City, New Jersey. He is one of seven children born to Michael A. and Caroline Marzitello Saltarelli. He attended Holy Rosary Elementary School and Ferris High School in Jersey City. In 1956 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Seton Hall University and began his study of theology at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Darlington, New Jersey.

Bishop Saltarelli was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Thomas A. Boland in Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark, New Jersey on May 28, 1960. He began his priestly ministry as an associate pastor at Holy Family Church in Nutley, New Jersey where he served from June 1960 to August 1977. While at Holy Family, he earned a Master's Degree in Religious Studies from Manhattan College. Bishop Saltarelli then served as pastor of Our Lady of Assumption Church in Bayonne, New Jersey from 1977 until August 1982.

Archbishop Peter L. Gerety appointed him Executive Director for Pastoral Services in the Archdiocese of Newark in 1982. In 1984, Pope John Paul II named Bishop Saltarelli a Prelate of Honor with the title of "Monsignor." On June 1, 1985, he was appointed pastor of Saint Catherine of Siena Church in Cedar Grove, New Jersey.

In November 1987, Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick appointed him Vicar for Priests for the Archdiocese of Newark. Bishop Saltarelli has also served as Dean of North Essex, Dean of Bayonne and Dean of West Essex. His service in the Archdiocese of Newark included two terms as a member of the Priests' Personnel Board, one term as President of that Board and also as a member of the Archdiocesan School Board.

The appointment of Bishop Saltarelli as Titular Bishop of Mesarfelta and Auxiliary Bishop of Newark was announced on June 12, 1990. He also became the Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral while continuing to serve as Vicar for Priests. In 1992, he became the Episcopal Moderator of the National Holy Name Society. He also served as New Jersey State Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus.

On November 21, 1995, Pope John Paul II appointed Bishop Saltarelli to be the Eighth Bishop of the See of Wilmington.

After some months of getting to know the Diocese of Wilmington and its people, Bishop Saltarelli established seven priorities for the diocese. They are the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the development and implementation of a comprehensive pastoral plan for ministry to Hispanic people, the assessment of diocesan offices and ministries to assure efficiency and effectiveness, the establishment of new parishes and schools, the exploration and examination of the roles of clergy and laity in parish ministry, the evangelization of the unchurched and alienated African American community, and the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan for ministry on college campuses.

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Bishop Saltarelli has made significant contributions on national Catholic discussions concerning the sanctity of human life in the womb and all its stages, the need to reach out to inactive Catholics, the need for a consistent use of the Catholic funeral rites and the importance of solid Catholic marriage preparation. Bishop Saltarelli's Pastoral Statement *How to Reach Inactive Catholics* was the lead contribution in the January 27, 2000 edition of *Origins*. Additional Pastoral Statements include *Holiness in the World of Work* (2001), *The Spiritual Lessons of September 11* (2002), *Catholic Schools - A Gift of the Church* (2002), *Contemplating the Face of Christ in Film* (2004), *Go and Teach: Facing the Challenges of Catechesis Today* and, most recently, *Celebrating the Year of Saint Paul, June 28, 2008 - June 29, 2009* (2008). Bishop Saltarelli's *Litany of Saint Thomas More, Martyr and Patron Saint of Statesmen, Politicians and Lawyers*, first published in October 2004, gained national and international acclaim.

Bishop Saltarelli presided over an era of expansion and growth in the Diocese of Wilmington. A three-year capital campaign, *Bringing the Vision to Life*, addressed the needs of a growing diocesan family to build, renovate and expand churches, schools and other facilities throughout the diocese. With Bishop Saltarelli's leadership, new schools and parishes have been established, existing schools have been expanded and numerous capital projects have been completed in parishes throughout the diocese.

Under Bishop Saltarelli's leadership, the Global Solidarity Partnership between the Diocese of Wilmington and the Diocese of San Marcos, Guatemala and *For the Sake of God's Children*, the diocesan safe environment program to educate on sexual abuse prevention and detection have both been used as examples for other dioceses in the United States.

As Bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington, Bishop Saltarelli ordained 23 men to the diocesan priesthood and 47 men to the permanent diaconate.

Bishop Saltarelli has been an active member of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). He has served on their Education Sub-Committee, Committee on African American Catholics, Advisory Board of the National Religious Retirement Office, Committee on Laity, Nomination Committee and Communications Committee. He was also elected Chairman of Region IV Bishops and served on the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Board of Trustees and was appointed Chairman of the CRS Finance Committee. Bishop Saltarelli was appointed to the Board of Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland; Board of Overseers of Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange, New Jersey and to the Board of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

The Catholic Diocese of Wilmington was established in 1868 and comprises 58 parishes, 18 missions and 37 schools serving the State of Delaware and the nine counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore. Information about the diocese and Bishop Saltarelli's writings are available at www.cdown.org on the Internet.

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