

# NEWS

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NOTICE TO AREA MEDIA  
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## **Pope accepts resignation of Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm**

*Diocese considered a vacant diocese until new appointment made*

**NEW ULM** - The Most Rev. John M. LeVoir has resigned as bishop of the Diocese of New Ulm due to health reasons. Pope Francis accepted his resignation effective Aug. 6, 2020. Bishop LeVoir, 74, who was appointed bishop of New Ulm on July 14, 2008, is now considered a retired bishop. A typical retirement age for a bishop is 75.

Since early July, Bishop LeVoir has been undergoing a physical and psychological assessment at Sacred Heart Mercy Health Care Center in Alma, Mich., operated by the Religious Sisters of Mercy. He will remain in Alma until early September to undertake a therapy plan.

“Although these last years have been very challenging for the diocese and the life of the Church, it has been a privilege to have served the faithful of the Diocese of New Ulm. As bishop, it has not only been a great honor, but an enriching experience as I have come to know many people throughout this local Church. I have been impressed by their love for Jesus Christ, their willingness to share their Catholic faith, and their concern for the less fortunate. It would not have been possible to serve as their shepherd without their continued support, cooperation, and prayers,” said Bishop LeVoir.

According to the Code of Canon Law, when the bishop of a diocese vacates his office, and no simultaneous appointment is made by the Holy See to fill the office, a diocesan administrator is elected by the diocesan College of Consultors to govern the diocese. The diocesan administrator is elected from the active priests of the diocese and is at least 35 years of age. Once he accepts the election, he holds the power of a bishop until the pope appoints a new bishop.

There is no timeline for the appointment of a new bishop. However, the search for a replacement will begin immediately, a process run primarily by the Vatican.

Msgr. Douglas Grams, the vicar general of the diocese under Bishop LeVoir offered prayerful best wishes to him. “I applaud Bishop LeVoir for recognizing his health concerns and making the request for early retirement. I thank him for his devoted leadership during his tenure as the shepherd of our diocese.”

A native of Minneapolis, Bishop LeVoir was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in 1981. He was serving as pastor at the Church of St. Michael and the Church of St. Mary in Stillwater, Minn., when Pope Benedict XVI appointed him on July 14, 2008, as the fourth bishop of New Ulm.

Established on Nov. 18, 1957, the Diocese of New Ulm consists of 15 counties in south and west-central Minnesota: Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Nicollet, Redwood, Renville, Sibley, Swift, and Yellow Medicine, a total of 9,863 square miles. It encompasses nearly 50,933 Catholics in 61 parishes served by 35 assigned priests and 19 permanent deacons. There are 13 Catholic elementary schools and three Catholic high schools.