



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Biography - Bishop Walter A. Hurley

Bishop Hurley was born Walter Allison Hurley on May 30, 1937, in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. He is the son of Charles R. Hurley and Anne Elizabeth Ball (both deceased). He has four sisters and a brother: Elizabeth Deal, Gerald Hurley (deceased), Eileen Godin, Charlene Soleau (deceased) and Annette Burt.

Bishop Hurley attended St. Dunstan Grade School in Fredericton, and St. Anne High School in Church Point, Nova Scotia. He moved to Detroit, Michigan, in 1955. He graduated from Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit, in 1961 (B.A.) and St. John's Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan, in 1965 (M.Div.).

Following his ordination to the priesthood June 5, 1965, by Archbishop (later Cardinal) John F. Dearden, he was assigned as associate pastor of St. Dorothy Parish in Warren, Michigan. He served as vicar for the Warren-Centerline Vicariate. In 1972, he was appointed pastor of St. Cyprian Parish, Riverview (1972-76), then Sacred Heart Parish, Roseville (1976-1979), and St. Lucy Parish, St. Clair Shores (1979-1982).

At the invitation of Archbishop (later Cardinal) Edmund Szoka, he began graduate studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where he earned his licentiate in canon law (J.C.L) in 1984. Upon his return to the Archdiocese of Detroit, he served as judicial vicar of the Metropolitan Tribunal from 1984 to 1989. In addition, he served as moderator of the curia for the archdiocese from 1986 to 1990. In 1990, he was designated a prelate of honor with the title of monsignor by His Holiness Pope John Paul II. In 1994, he became a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

In 1990, Bishop Hurley was appointed pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Farmington, Michigan, where he served until November 2003. From 1988 to 1995, and again from 2002 to 2005, he served as delegate of the cardinal for clergy misconduct issues. From 1995 to 2001, he was the cardinal's delegate and project manager for the construction of the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C.



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Bishop Hurley was ordained the 22nd auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit on August 12, 2003. He was named the bishop of the Titular See of Cunavia. Bishop Hurley was responsible for the Northwest Region of the archdiocese, encompassing Oakland and Lapeer Counties.

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI appointed him bishop of Grand Rapids on June 21, 2005. Bishop Hurley was installed as the eleventh bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids on August 4, 2005, at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew.

In 2007, Bishop Hurley initiated the process that consolidated three separate social service organizations into Catholic Charities West Michigan and established *FAITH Grand Rapids* magazine to evangelize, connect and inform the faithful of West Michigan. Also in that year, Bishop Hurley, along with the assistance of many supporters, orchestrated the development and construction of Cathedral Square, the 11.5-acre campus in Grand Rapids, which connects the Curia offices, Catholic Central High School and the Cathedral of Saint Andrew on one plot of land in downtown Grand Rapids. Cathedral Square Center, which anchors Cathedral Square to the south, houses the Curia offices, the Catholic Information Center, and the Wege Conference Center. This beautiful building has become a central location for diocesan meetings and events, helping to unite Catholics across the diocese.

Recognizing the need to assure a strong and vibrant Church in the 11-county diocese and establish a well-defined course for the years to come, Bishop Hurley launched the “Our Faith, Our Future” pastoral planning process in 2009. The three-year initiative proceeded through input from pastors, principals and parish leaders and resulted in the reallocation of resources within the diocese to allow the Church in West Michigan to be better prepared for future challenges.

During Bishop Hurley’s nearly eight-year-long appointment as bishop of Grand Rapids, the diocese also saw increasing success in its priestly vocations program, with 21 men enrolled in seminary in 2012 with three priestly ordinations that year.



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

As required by canon law, Bishop Hurley submitted his letter of resignation to Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of his 75th birthday in May 2012. On April 18, 2013, the Holy See announced that Pope Francis had appointed Bishop-elect David J. Walkowiak, a priest of the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio, to succeed Bishop Hurley. Bishop Hurley served as apostolic administrator of the diocese until Bishop Walkowiak's installation on June 18, 2013. After that date, he officially retired and became bishop emeritus, but he never stopped his pastoral and administrative work.

On Oct. 17, 2018, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Hurley as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Saginaw, following the sudden death of Most Reverend Joseph Cistone, bishop of Saginaw. Bishop Hurley served the Diocese of Saginaw until the installation of Bishop Robert Gruss on July 26, 2019.

On June 23, 2020, Most Reverend Steven J. Raica, bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama, leaving the Diocese of Gaylord vacant. Pope Francis appointed Bishop Hurley as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord until a new bishop was named. Bishop Hurley addressed the spiritual needs of the faithful of the diocese and governed the diocese until the sixth bishop of Gaylord, Most Reverend Jeffrey Walsh, was installed on March 4, 2022.

Bishop Hurley continues to assist in parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit.