

## Pope Francis names Polish priest as new bishop for Western Australia diocese



BISKUP NOMINAT

FOT. KS. PAWEŁ WRÓBEL SDS

Pope Francis has appointed Father George Kolodziej, SDS, as the new bishop of a vast diocese in Western Australia, the Vatican announced Monday.

The Polish-born Salvatorian, who currently serves as the superior of the Salvatorians in Australia, will become the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Bunbury, which covers the entire southwestern portion of Western Australia.

He succeeds Bishop Gerard Holohan, who led the diocese for 22 years until his retirement was accepted by Pope Francis in June 2023 at the age of 75.

The **Bunbury Diocese** spans approximately 184,000 square kilometers (71,000 square miles) — an area one and a half times the size of England — and encompasses 26 parishes. The diocese ministers to more than 57,000 Catholics, representing about 20% of the total population in the region.

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SDB, of Perth, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference — who served as administrator of the diocese following Holohan's retirement — praised the bishop-elect's "profound" Salvatorian spirituality and pastoral experience.

"Father George will bring a wealth of experience in parish ministry, youth ministry, and spiritual and pastoral accompaniment to the new mission to which the Lord has called him," the archbishop said.

Born in Dobra, Poland, in 1968, Kolodziej entered the Society of the Divine Savior (Salvatorians) in 1987 and made his perpetual profession in 1992. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1994 by Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, then-archbishop of Krakow.

After his ordination, he was sent to Australia, where he served in various pastoral roles, including parish ministry, school chaplaincy, and youth ministry. He holds master's degrees in theology and pastoral care/psychotherapy and a postgraduate diploma in addiction studies.

The bishop-elect directs the Salvatorian Spirituality Centre in Perth and has served as chaplain for Catholic Education Western Australia since 2019. His experience includes counselling and support work with individuals recovering from addiction.

The ordination and installation ceremony are expected to take place in March.



*St Patrick's Cathedral, Bunbury, Western Australia. / Credit: Calistemon, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons*

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**Sources:** <https://episkopat.pl/doc/222993.ks-Jerzy-Kolodziej-zostal-mianowany-biskupem-diecezji-Banbury-w>

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