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Contact: Ned McGrath (w) 313-237-5943 / (h) 313-886-4114

### **Bishop Allen H. Vigneron Seminary Rector Named Coadjutor Bishop of Oakland, California**

Pope John Paul II has named Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Allen H. Vigneron (pronounced *VIG-ner-on*) as Coadjutor (pronounced *co-ah-JU-tor*) Bishop with Bishop John S. Cummins of the Diocese of Oakland, California, with the right of succession. Bishop Cummins, 74, has served as the Bishop of Oakland since 1977. Bishop Vigneron, 54, currently serves as Rector/President of Detroit's Sacred Heart Major Seminary.

The date on which Bishop Vigneron will formally join the Diocese of Oakland has not yet been determined. "I have no hesitation in accepting from Pope John Paul II the mission to serve as the Coadjutor Bishop of Oakland, since I recognize in his decision the will of God for me," said Bishop Vigneron.

"I am grateful for all the love I have received during my ministry in the Archdiocese of Detroit and grateful for all the opportunities given me to bestow love," he added. "While Oakland now becomes my home, the pastors and people of the archdiocese will always be in my heart."

Established in 1962, the Diocese of Oakland is made up of two counties, Alameda and Contra Costa, in northern California and contains 1,467 square miles. There are 89 parishes and missions, 200 active priests and a Catholic population of 428,466.

Bishop Vigneron was born in Mt. Clemens, Michigan, and is eldest of the six children of Elwin and Bernadine (Kott) Vigneron of Fair Haven, Michigan. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 26, 1975 at St. Clement of Rome Church, Romeo, Michigan, following studies at Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit, and the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome.

Bishop Vigneron holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit; a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome; a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Gregorian University, a Master's degree in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the Catholic University of America.

"Pastor, teacher, administrator – these are among the many skills Bishop Vigneron will bring to his new assignment," said Cardinal Adam Maida, archbishop of Detroit. "The clergy, religious and laity of Oakland are truly blessed by this appointment.

"As I noted when I appointed him rector/president of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, as a doctor of philosophy – a unique, somewhat unusual degree in our go-along, get-along, hurry-up world – Bishop Vigneron has not only the expertise, but the inner strength to handle the most challenging job.

"He is a determined leader. Bishop Vigneron has made the spiritual and intellectual development of the faculty, staff and students at Detroit's seminary his primary goal," the cardinal noted. "I know he will bring the same energy and determination to the priests and people of Oakland."

Ordained an Auxiliary Bishop in 1996, Bishop Vigneron has served the Church in a variety of posts. His past assignments include: Associate Pastor, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Harper Woods; Temporary Associate Pastor, St. Anastasia Parish, Troy; Professor of Philosophy and Theology, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit; Vicar General, Archdiocese of Detroit; Vice-Rector, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit; and Academic Dean, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit. He also served on the staff of the Vatican Secretariate of State Office. In 1994, he was named to his current position of Rector/President of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit.

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**Digital color photos of Bishop Allen Vigneron are available, call 313-237-5943. For more information on the Diocese of Oakland, California, check the diocesan website at [www.oakdiocese.org](http://www.oakdiocese.org).**