

MOST REVEREND NELSON J. PÉREZ, D.D.
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Nelson J. Pérez was born in Miami, Florida, on June 16, 1961, to David and Emma Pérez. He was raised in West New York, New Jersey, and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Montclair State University in 1983.

He then entered Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia, where he earned Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Theology degrees in 1988 and 1989.

Father Pérez was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on May 20, 1989. His first priestly assignment was as Parochial Vicar of Saint Ambrose Parish, Philadelphia (1989-1993). He also served as Acting Director of the Office for Hispanic Catholics (1990-1993); founding Director of the Catholic Institute for Evangelization (1993-2002); Pastor of Saint William Parish, Philadelphia (2002-2009); and Pastor of Saint Agnes Parish, West Chester (2009-2012).

In 1998, he was named Chaplain to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, with the title of Monsignor. In 2009, he was named a Prelate of Honor by Pope Benedict XVI.

His work in education included teaching courses in psychology and religious studies at La Salle University, Philadelphia (1994-2008) and Developmental Psychology at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary (Fall, 2011).

Pope Benedict XVI appointed Monsignor Pérez, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre in New York on June 8, 2012. He was ordained a Bishop on July 25, 2012, in Saint Agnes Cathedral, Rockville Centre. As Auxiliary Bishop he served as Episcopal Vicar for the Eastern Vicariate, overseeing 66 parishes and as the Episcopal Vicar for Hispanic Ministry, overseeing 54 parishes with pastoral ministry to Hispanics along with Formation Programs and Ecclesial Movements. In addition, he served as a member of the Diocese of Rockville Centre's Priest Personnel Board; Presbyteral Council; Corporate Member of Catholic Health Services; Vice Chair of Catholic Charities Board of Directors and member of its Executive and Governance Committees; member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council; Chair of the Diocesan V Encuentro Planning Committee; and a board member of the Diocese's Catholic Faith Network.

On July 11, 2017, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Pérez the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland and he was installed at the Cathedral of Saint John the Evangelist on September 5, 2017.

On January 23, 2020, Pope Francis appointed him the 14th Bishop and 10th Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. A kind, joyous, and hard-working person, Archbishop Pérez enriches those ministries and people entrusted to his care. Rooted in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," Archbishop Pérez's pastoral vision can be summarized as: "Church on Mission: Proactive, Involved, Supportive, Fruitful, and Joyful."

In 2015, Archbishop Perez instituted the Trust and Hope initiative in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, a strategic and concerted effort to renew the Catholic Church of Philadelphia by investing in growth. This initiative emerged from 100 listening sessions involving nearly 15,000 participants. The initiative is focused on growing missionary capacity throughout the Church of Philadelphia by equipping its parishes, schools, and charitable ministries with the tools and resources necessary to grow organically. As a result, they will maximize their ability to fulfill the Great Commission of sharing the love of Jesus and spreading the Word of God to those not engaged in the life of the Church.

This missionary initiative has resulted in the establishment of five Missionary Hubs connected to parishes as well as a Digital Missionary Hub designed to engage a new generation of digital natives. It is envisioned that approximately 50 Missionary Hubs will be established over the next decade. Part of this initiative also involves a public outreach campaign “Catholic.Every.Day” that connects all in the Philadelphia metropolitan area to the message of the Gospel and demonstrates the Catholic Church as the greatest force for good in the region.

As a part of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Pérez has served as a member of the Administrative Committee; Chair of the Bishops’ Standing Committee on Cultural Diversity; Chair of the Bishops’ Sub-Committee for Hispanic Affairs; lead Bishop for the V Encuentro process for the USCCB; a member of the Bishops’ Sub-Committee for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development; and a member of the Religious Liberty Committee. In November 2022, Archbishop Pérez was appointed to the Board of Catholic Relief Services serving as Chair for a three-year term.

He currently serves on the following boards: Board of Trustees of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.; Board of Trustees of the Papal Foundation; National Eucharistic Congress; the Black and Indian and Mission; the National Catholic Bio-Ethics Center; and the Episcopal Advisor for the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).

In December 2020, Pope Francis appointed Archbishop Pérez to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. Pope Leo XIV reappointed him to this commission in 2026.

In September 2021, Archbishop Pérez received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from La Salle University, Philadelphia.

In December 2022, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Neumann University, Aston.

In May 2024, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Sacred Letters from Villanova University, Villanova.