

Newly ordained bishop celebrates Mass of thanksgiving in home archdiocese

ST. PAUL, Minn. (CNS) – Calling children to the front of the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, Bishop Donald E. DeGrood talked directly to them of God’s love and courageously following God’s will at his Mass of thanksgiving Feb. 16 in St. Paul.

He was in St. Paul just three days after he was ordained the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, by Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and Minneapolis at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Sioux Falls.

“I can tell you this, in my experience, there’s nothing like being in love with God, and loving ourselves the way God loves us and loving others the way he loves them. So let’s ask God to fill us with wisdom, fill us with love, so we can go out and courageously do whatever he wants us to do,” Bishop DeGrood said in his homily.

Back in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, which he called home as a youngster growing up in Faribault, Minnesota, as a seminarian and as a priest, Bishop DeGrood was greeted by a congregation of more than 1,200 people – from preschoolers to seniors, many from parishes he once served.

He said he didn’t want to leave everyone he knows and loves – his family and friends, deacons, priests and others, but the Lord called him and assured him that his grace would be enough. God calls everyone to his will, and gives love and joy even in the midst of sacrifices to see his will through, Bishop DeGrood said.

Joining him at the Mass of thanksgiving were Archbishop Hebda and Auxiliary Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Born and raised on a farm near Faribault, then-Father DeGrood was a pastor and the archdiocese's vicar for clergy and held other roles in the archdiocese. He served as pastor of St. Peter in Forest Lake, Blessed Sacrament in St. Paul and St. John the Baptist in Savage.

Renee and Brian Krautkremer were not surprised that Bishop DeGrood invited students to come up front during his homily and to help bring up the offertory gifts. Their fifth grader, Grace, and second grader, Paige, who attend St. John the Baptist School, were among those who gathered near Bishop DeGrood during the homily.

"He often gets kids involved and is great at talking to them at their level," Renee told *The Catholic Spirit*, the archdiocesan newspaper. "We're happy for him," she said, "but he will be hard to replace."

At the end of Mass, Bishop DeGrood said everyone's presence was a great gift to him. He wished for everyone to stay close to the Lord and on the path that leads to heaven.