

Dear Members of the Notre Dame Community,

In my capacity as Chair of Notre Dame's Board of Trustees, it is my great pleasure and honor to announce that today our Board elected **Fr. Robert A Dowd, C.S.C.**, as the next president of the University of Notre Dame. Fr. Dowd will assume the duties of the presidency on July 1, 2024, and will spend the next seven months working closely with Fr. Jenkins.

On behalf of the Board, allow me to express how excited we are that Fr. Dowd has accepted our invitation to serve as president. We are confident that he will be a worthy successor to Fr. Jenkins, who leads the University with courage, wisdom and vision, and has done so for nearly two decades. We thank Fr. Jenkins for his extraordinary leadership and look forward to celebrating him when his term as president ends on July 1.

Today's announcement regarding Fr. Dowd's election is the culmination of a multi-year succession planning process conducted by our Board, with invaluable assistance from Fr. Jenkins, and Fr. William Lies, C.S.C., Provincial Superior of the U.S. Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross. The process has been disciplined, rigorous, and thorough. It is the comprehensiveness of this process over an extended period of time that gives us such confidence that Fr. Dowd is the right person to build on the accomplishments of the past decades and lead Notre Dame into the future. As articulated so well in the University's new strategic framework, our vision for the University is bold: Notre Dame must be the leading global Catholic research university, on par with but distinct from the world's best private universities.

Since its founding, Notre Dame has been led by a priest-president from the Congregation of Holy Cross, the religious order to which Fr. Sorin, the University's founder, belonged. The University has had only three presidents in the last 70 years, each exceptional in their own right---Fr. Jenkins, Fr. Edward Malloy, C.S.C. and Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C. Fr. Dowd continues in this rich tradition as a person of deep faith and great talent---- truly a priest/scholar/teacher/leader. He is a respected member of the academy, a global citizen, an experienced, effective, and inclusive administrator, and, just as importantly, a person of humility, compassion and integrity. Fr. Dowd is passionate about the future of Notre Dame and about what we can accomplish together. His intellectual curiosity and love for the world of ideas as well as his sound judgment, generosity of spirit, and commitment to continued growth--his own and that of others---have characterized his leadership thus far, and are sure to be hallmarks of his presidency.

A native of Michigan City, Indiana, Fr. Dowd graduated from Notre Dame in 1987, earning a bachelor's degree in psychology and economics, and entered Moreau Seminary in the fall of that year to explore his vocation to the priesthood. During his time in the seminary, he asked to be assigned to East Africa and spent 18 months there, which he describes as a life-changing experience. After professing final vows in the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1993 and being ordained a priest in 1994, he worked in Campus Ministry at Notre Dame. He began graduate studies at UCLA in 1996, earning his PhD in political science in 2003, and, in 2004, joined Notre

Dame's political science department as a member of the faculty. Specializing in comparative politics, his research focuses on how Christian and Islamic religious communities affect support for democratic institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. He has published articles in leading academic journals and a book with Oxford University Press.

In addition to his teaching and research, Fr. Dowd has had other important leadership roles, notably as the founding director of Notre Dame's Ford Program in Human Development and Solidarity. He went on to serve as assistant provost for Internationalization before taking up his current position as vice president and associate provost for interdisciplinary initiatives, a core element of the University's new strategic framework. He is a member of Fr. Jenkins' President's Leadership Council. Fr. Dowd currently serves on both the Board of Fellows and the Board of Trustees for the University, and is a Trustee for Stonehill College in Easton, MA. He also serves as Religious Superior of the Holy Cross Community at Notre Dame and has ministered to students on campus for many years as a priest-in-residence in Dillon, Saint Edward's, and Cavanaugh Halls.

This is a historic and exciting day for Notre Dame. I want to thank the Board for their dedication and hard work in identifying the next great president of the University, and to congratulate Fr. Dowd most heartily on his election. Through the intercession of Mary, Our Patroness, we ask for God's blessing on Fr. Dowd and on Fr. Jenkins, and all who lead Our Lady's University.

In Notre Dame,

Jack Brennan