

BIOGRAPHY
MOST REVEREND CHARLES J. CHAPUT, O.F.M. Cap., D.D.
Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput was born September 26, 1944, in Concordia, Kansas, the son of Joseph and Marian DeMarais Chaput. He attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help Grade School in Concordia and St. Francis Seminary High School in Victoria, Kansas. He joined the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, St. Augustine Province, in 1965.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from St. Fidelis College Seminary in Herman, Pennsylvania, in 1967, Archbishop Chaput completed Studies in Theology at Catholic University in Washington D.C., in 1969. He earned a Master of Arts in Religious Education from Capuchin College in Washington D.C., in 1970 and was ordained to the priesthood on August 29, 1970.

Archbishop Chaput received a Master of Arts in Theology from the University of San Francisco in 1971. He served as an instructor in theology and spiritual director at St. Fidelis from 1971-1974 and as executive secretary and director of communications for the Capuchin Province of St. Augustine in Pittsburgh from 1974-1977

In 1977, Archbishop Chaput became pastor of Holy Cross Parish in Thornton, Colorado, and vicar provincial for the Capuchin Province of Mid-America. He was named secretary and treasurer for the province in 1980, and he became chief executive and provincial minister three years later.

Archbishop Chaput was ordained Bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota, on July 26, 1988. Pope John Paul II appointed him Archbishop of Denver on February 18, 1997, and he was installed on April 7 the same year. As a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribe, Archbishop Chaput was the second Native American to be ordained a bishop in the United States, and the first Native American archbishop. He chose as his episcopal motto: "As Christ Loved the Church" (Ephesians 5:25).

Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Archbishop of Philadelphia on July 19, 2011. He was installed as the 13th bishop and ninth archbishop of Philadelphia on September 8, 2011.

On January 23, 2020, Archbishop Chaput became Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia upon Pope Francis' acceptance of his letter of resignation written when he reached the age of 75. Until February 18, 2020, when his successor was installed as Archbishop of Philadelphia, Archbishop Chaput served as Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese.

In 1999, building on the efforts of his predecessor in Denver, Archbishop Chaput founded St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, an affiliate of the Pontifical Lateran University. From 1998 to 2011, Archbishop Chaput ordained 71 men for the Archdiocese of Denver. Nearly half of the diocesan priests in active duty for the archdiocese were ordained by him.

In 2002, assisted by his Auxiliary Bishop José Gomez, Archbishop Chaput founded Centro San Juan Diego in response to the pastoral and educational needs of the growing Hispanic community in Colorado. He later co-founded the national Catholic Association of Latino Leaders (CALL) and helped in the founding of ENDOW, a leadership initiative of Catholic women to “Educate on the Nature and Dignity of Women.” He was also instrumental in creating the Denver-based Augustine Institute, an independent, lay-run graduate school for the formation of lay Catholic leaders, catechists and evangelizers.

Archbishop Chaput served on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2003-2006. Duties included religious freedom fact-finding missions to China and Turkey, and annual reports monitoring global trends in religious liberty mandated by 1998 federal law.

In 2005, he was named a member of the official U.S. delegation to Cordoba, Spain, for the “Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance,” sponsored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The national Becket Fund for Religious Liberty awarded him the 2009 Canterbury Medal for his work in advancing religious freedom.

Archbishop Chaput served on the Board of Directors for The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (1994 – 2009) and the National Catholic Bioethics Center (1993 – 2006). He served on the board of directors for Eternal Word Television Network, Birmingham, Alabama (1996 – 2021); The Catholic Foundation of Northern Colorado (1998 – 2011); St. John Vianney Theological Seminary in Northern Colorado (1999 – 2011); Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Northern Colorado (1998 – 2011); The Fellowship of Catholic University Students (2001 – 2013); Catholic Association of Latino Leaders (2007 – 2018); World Youth Alliance International (2010 – 2019). As Archbishop of Philadelphia, he served as the ex-officio Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary.

For the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, Archbishop Chaput has served as Chair of the Subcommittee on Native American Catholics; a member of the Committee for Cultural Diversity in the Church and the Task Force for Health Care; a member of the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty; and a consultant to the Committee for Pro-Life Activities. He also served on the Committee for Divine Worship, the Committee for Migration, the Committee for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and the Task Force on Strengthening Marriage.

Archbishop Chaput served the Holy See as an Apostolic Visitor to U.S. seminaries, (2005 – 2006); the Diocese of Toowoomba, Australia, (2007); and the Legion of Christ for Canada and the United States, (2009 – 2010). In February 2014 he was appointed to the Pontifical Council for the Laity by Pope Francis. In 2015, he hosted the World Meeting of Families and visit of Pope Francis to Philadelphia. He participated in the 2015 Synod of Bishops on the Family in Rome and was named a permanent member of the council for that synod.

He is author of four books: *Living the Catholic Faith: Rediscovering the Basics* (Servant, 2001), *Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life* (Doubleday, 2008); *Strangers in a Strange Land: Living the Catholic Faith in a Post-Christian World* (Henry Holt and Co., 2017); *Things Worth Dying For: Thoughts on a Life Worth Living* (Henry Holt and Co., 2021); and numerous talks, articles and pastoral letters. His writings, discourses, and homilies are available at www.archphila.org.