



About The Most Reverend David L. Ricken

David Laurin Ricken was born Nov. 9, 1952, to George William “Bill” and Bertha (Davis) Ricken in Dodge City, Kansas, the second of three children, including Mark and Carol.

He attended Sacred Heart Cathedral Grade School in Dodge City, and St. Francis Seminary High School in Victoria, Kansas. He entered college at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio, and graduated from Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri, in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He conducted his theological studies for the Diocese of Pueblo at St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana and the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium where he earned his graduate degree in sacred theology and completed his seminary formation.

He was ordained a priest on Sept. 12, 1980, by the Bishop of Pueblo, Arthur Tafoya, at La Junta Catholic Parish in southeast Colorado. His first appointment was as associate pastor to the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Pueblo. Five years later, he was named the administrator of Holy Rosary Parish in Pueblo and vice chancellor of the Diocese.

In 1987, then-Father Ricken attended the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome where he received his Licentiate degree (J.C.L.) in Canon Law (church law) in 1989. Upon returning to the diocese, he was appointed the vocation director and vicar for ministry formation. Three years later, he added diocesan chancellor to his responsibilities as well as assisting in the Diocesan Tribunal. He served in these positions until Oct. 1, 1996, when he was nominated to be an official of the Congregation for the Clergy at the Vatican where he served through December 1999.

On Jan. 6, 2000, he was ordained to the episcopacy for the Diocese of Cheyenne at the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome by His Holiness, Pope John Paul II. The Mass of Welcome to the Diocese of Cheyenne took place on Feb. 11, 2000, in Cheyenne. On Sept. 26, 2001, Bishop Ricken succeeded Bishop Joseph Hart as the seventh leader of the Diocese of Cheyenne. During his tenure in the diocese, Bishop was one of the founding members of the Wyoming Catholic College.

Pope Benedict XVI named Bishop Ricken the twelfth bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay on July 9, 2008. He was installed as bishop on Aug. 28, 2008, at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Green Bay.

During his tenure as bishop in Green Bay, he has issued the following:

- A 3,500-word pastoral letter, “A New Moment for Catechesis in the Diocese of Green Bay” in November 2009 that focuses on the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults and its role in faith formation and religion instruction in the diocese.
- The “Decree on the Authenticity of the Apparitions of 1859 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help” in Champion, Wisconsin, to Adele Brise. This decree was issued on December 8, 2010, when Bishop Ricken was the first and only diocesan bishop in the United States to officially approve a Marian apparition.
- A 2,100-word “Pastoral Statement on Living Justice in the Diocese of Green Bay” in 2011 that calls for establishment of a new diocesan Commission on Living Justice to take the leading role in the catechesis, planning and implementation of Catholic social teaching in the Diocese of Green Bay.

- A 10,020-word pastoral letter, “Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged, Fully Alive” on the Solemnity of Pentecost, June 12, 2011, that focuses on the priorities for parishes and the Diocese of Green Bay. By looking at what is good and great in the parish communities, he challenges all to dare to dream about what we could become as parish communities called to be holy, fully engaged and fully alive.
- “Disciples on the Way, ” an invitation to priests, deacons, religious, pastoral leaders and all the faithful to engage in the new evangelization by beginning a six-year journey of prayer, preaching, teaching and growing in faith, that asks us not to do more, but to be more; to be more like Jesus in all aspects of our lives, work and ministries. “Teach My People to Pray,” the first reflection in Bishop’s six-year journey, addresses the theme of prayer and will guide the faithful for the first two years.
- A 19,076-word pastoral letter, “Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist: Disciples Called to Worship” on the Feast of St. Augustine, August 28, 2022. Providentially, this diocesan initiative coincides with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops call for the “Eucharistic Revival.” The Worship Jesus years in the Diocese of Green Bay will be a journey for parishes to become centered on the Eucharist so that all may come to a greater devotion to God our Father and his most beloved Son, Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Ricken is a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and a member of the Committee for Canonical Affairs and Church Governance. He is a member of the Bishops' Advisory Council for the Institute for Priestly Formation and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society. Bishop Ricken is also the co-chair for the International Commission for dialogue between the Disciples of Christ and the Catholic Church. He serves on the Board of Director’s for Relevant Radio.

Formerly, Bishop Ricken chaired the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis. He served on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ editorial oversight board for the National Directory of Catechesis and was a member of the Committee for Domestic Justice and Human Development, the Committee on Home Missions and on the Pro-Life committee. He represented his region as a member of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People. Bishop Ricken is past-President of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference and former Chairman of the Committee on the American College of Louvain in Belgium.

09-4-2024 supersedes 02-26-2018