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Vatican’s New Tone Gains a Voice in Chicago as Blase Cupich Becomes Archbishop

In Pope Francis’ most significant move yet to reshape the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, Blase J. Cupich took his seat in Chicago on Tuesday as archbishop of the nation’s third-largest Catholic archdiocese and called on the church not to be afraid of change.

In a multilingual installation Mass at Holy Name Cathedral, with American bishops, his large extended family and Mayor Rahm Emanuel looking on, Archbishop Cupich was handed the golden crosier, a shepherd’s staff, that belonged to a powerful liberal predecessor, Cardinal George Mundelein, who became archbishop of Chicago 99 years ago and served for 24 years.

“We as a church should not fear leaving the security of familiar shores, the peacefulness of the mountaintop of our self-assuredness, but rather walk into the mess,” Archbishop Cupich said in an upbeat and plain-spoken homily.

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