News



Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Neb., is pictured in a 2012 photo. The Diocese of Lincoln announced Dec. 13, 2019, that Conley will take a medical leave of absence, effective immediately. Due to serious medical issues, Conley formally requested a temporary leave of absence from Pope Francis, and the request was accepted. (CNS/Paul Haring)



by Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

## Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Lincoln, Neb. — December 16, 2019

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint



Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Neb., is pictured in a 2012 photo. The Diocese of Lincoln announced Dec. 13, 2019, that Conley will take a medical leave of absence, effective immediately. Due to serious medical issues, Conley formally requested a temporary leave of absence from Pope Francis, and the request was accepted. (CNS/Paul Haring)

The Diocese of Lincoln announced Dec. 13 that Bishop James D. Conley will take a medical leave of absence, effective immediately.

Due to serious medical issues, Conley formally requested a temporary leave of absence from Pope Francis, and the request was accepted.

Francis has appointed Archbishop George J. Lucas of Omaha to serve as apostolic administrator during Bishop Conley's temporary leave of absence.

In a letter to the faithful of the Diocese of Lincoln, Conley announced that he has been medically diagnosed with depression and anxiety, along with insomnia and tinnitus.

"My doctors have directed me to take a leave of absence for medical and psychological treatment, and to get some much-needed rest. After prayer, and seeking the counsel of my spiritual director, my brother bishops, and my family, I have accepted the medical necessity of a temporary leave of absence," Conley wrote.

The bishop announced his plans to "undergo the best psychological and medical treatment available to me," before returning to his ministry as diocesan bishop.

He said he will be at a diocesan retreat facility in the Diocese of Phoenix, "thanks to the kind invitation of Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted, while I undergo the best psychological and medical treatment available to me."

"Jesus Christ is the Divine Physician, who offers us the grace of healing. I entrust myself to the healing power of Christ, and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary," Conley added. "I am grateful to be your bishop, and I love the Diocese of Lincoln. It will be difficult to be away. Please pray for me, as I pray for you."

Lucas said in a statement: "I offer my full support to Bishop Conley as he steps away from the Diocese of Lincoln to focus on his personal health and well-being."

"As a brother bishop, I know the demands of being a diocesan pastor," he said. "As a friend, I want Bishop Conley to avail himself of the time and the setting that will help him to return to full health and strength. I look forward to welcoming him back when he is ready to return."

"In the meantime," Lucas added, "I am eager to work with the priests and lay faithful of the Diocese of Lincoln, to further the mission of Jesus Christ in the parishes, schools and apostolates of the diocese. I know that all will join me in praying for health and peace for Bishop Conley."

Advertisement