Vatican
Vatican News



Joe Donnelly, U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, attends a Mass in Rome celebrated by Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, patriarch of Jerusalem, for the cardinal to formally take possession of his titular church, the Church of St. Onuphrius on the Janiculum, May 1, 2024. (CNS/Lola Gomez)



Justin McLellan

Vatican Correspondent

View Author Profile

jmclellan@ncronline.org

Follow on Twitter at @m/McLellan_Js



Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

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

Vatican City — May 31, 2024
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See Joe Donnelly will leave his post in July, the embassy announced.

The ambassador will step down from his role and return to his native Indiana on July 8, the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See said in a post on X published May 30.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve my country in this unique way," Donnelly was quoted as saying in the post.

The former Indiana senator assumed his role in Rome in April 2022 when he presented his letters of credential to Pope Francis. His posting coincided with the 40th anniversary of the United States establishing formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See in 1984.

Advertisement

In a March interview with Catholic News Service, Donnelly said that when interacting with Vatican officials his job was "to try to make sure that where the United States stands, it's understood."

As an example, when Francis said the Russian invasion of Ukraine may have been "facilitated" in part "because NATO is barking at Russia's doors," Donnelly said, "We

tried to let them know, well, here's what's actually going on" in the various parts of Ukraine and "here's the plans that Russia actually had to invade Ukraine based on that they just wanted to take Ukraine back."

The embassy announced that Laura Hochla, a career diplomat who has served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See since July 2023, will serve as chargé d'affaires of the embassy.

A version of this story appeared in the **June 21-July 4, 2024** print issue under the headline: U.S. ambassador to Holy See to step down in July.