



The Diocese of Knoxville

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MEDIA ADVISORY
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Bishop rises to crown new Sacred Heart Cathedral on Friday American and papal flags and Christmas tree to be placed on structure

KNOXVILLE — Bishop Richard F. Stika will celebrate a major milestone in the construction of the new Sacred Heart Cathedral with a traditional “topping off” ceremony at 10 a.m. Friday, Aug. 26.

Bishop Stika will wear a safety harness and will be lifted to the top of the cathedral roof to place an American flag, a papal flag, and a Christmas tree on the front peak of the 28,000-square-foot structure. The reason for placing the flags may seem obvious, but the Christmas tree placement is part of a construction tradition. Merit Construction of Knoxville is the construction project manager for the building of the new Sacred Heart Cathedral.

While work on the cathedral will continue through 2017, the topping-off celebration marks the completion of construction on the steel frame, including the massive dome. The cathedral will rise to more than 147 feet, equivalent to 14 stories, when the cupola and cross are placed on the structure sometime this week.

Media are invited to attend this event on Friday, Aug. 26. Bishop Stika will be raised to the top of the cathedral roof at approximately 10 a.m. The ceremony should be completed by 10:30 a.m. Father David Boettner, a vicar general of the Diocese of Knoxville and rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, will emcee the event. Bishop Stika and Father Boettner will be available for interviews after the ceremony.

Sacred Heart Cathedral is located at 711 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, Tenn. 37919. For your convenience, please park using the first (main) entrance for the cathedral on Northshore Drive coming from Kingston Pike.