

## Latino Opus Dei archbishop to head Los Angeles

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Archbishop Jose Gomez (CNS photo)

The pope April 6 named Archbishop Jose Gomez of San Antonio, Texas, to take over the Los Angeles archdiocese when Cardinal Roger Mahony retires.

The appointment of the Mexican-born Gomez as coadjutor for Los Angeles puts him in line to become the highest-ranking Latino in the American Catholic hierarchy.

Gomez, 58, is the first, and currently only, full member of Opus Dei to be ordained a bishop in the United States.

At a future consistory, the pope would likely name Gomez a cardinal, given that Los Angeles is such a large and important archdiocese whose leader has traditionally worn a red hat.

Mahony, the current head of the archdiocese, is 74. The mandatory retirement age for bishops is 75.

Mahony will introduce Gomez today at a 10 a.m. press conference West Coast time inside the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels.

"I welcome Archbishop Gomez to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles with enthusiasm and personal excitement," said Mahony. "The auxiliary bishops and I are looking forward to working closely with him over the coming months until he becomes the Archbishop early in 2011."

Gomez was born in Monterrey, Mexico, and studied theology at the University of Navarra in Spain. On January 23, 2001, Gómez was appointed auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Denver.

Gómez was appointed Archbishop of San Antonio on December 29, 2004.

In 2005 he was named one of *Time Magazine's* 25 most influential Hispanics in the United States, and in 2007 he was on a CNN's list of "Notable Hispanics" in a web special celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.

On July 25, 2008 he was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI as a consultant to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

He is also a member of the Board of Trustees at The Catholic University of America. Gomez is the Chairman on the Subcommittee on the Church in Latin America of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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