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Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 3

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VATICAN CITY -- Following are thumbnail bios of some of the 24 new cardinals announced by Pope Benedict XVI Oct. 20 at the Vatican:

Cardinal-designate Elio Sgreccia

Cardinal-designate Elio Sgreccia, 82, an Italian bishop, is a bioethics expert who served as president of the Pontifical Academy for Life from 2005 to 2008. During that time he articulated, with Pope Benedict XVI, the Vatican position on many thorny issues such as embryonic stem-cell research, euthanasia, the definition of brain death, abortion, in vitro fertilization.

Elio Sgreccia was born in Arcevia, Italy. He was ordained June 29, 1952, and served as rector of the local seminary. Pope John Paul II consecrated him a bishop Jan. 6, 1993.

Cardinal-designate Sgreccia served as secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family before Pope John Paul named him as head of the academy for life Jan. 3, 2005. John Paul died just three months later; the cardinal-designate led the academy under Pope Benedict until he retired in 2008.

He has written numerous books on various aspects of bioethical questions. He serves as president of the International Federation of Bioethics Centers and Institutes of Personalist Inspiration, which puts the value of the person at the center of every phase of life, from birth to death.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Medardo Mazombwe

Cardinal-designate Medardo Mazombwe, 79, is the retired archbishop of Lusaka, Zambia. He is well known for his attention to the heavy debt burdens of developing countries and working to persuade wealthier nations to forgive those debts.

He was born in Chundamira, Zambia. He was ordained in 1960 and in 1971 was consecrated a bishop by Pope Paul VI.

In 1996, Pope John Paul II made him archbishop of Lusaka, the capital, where he served for 10 years before retiring.

He was president of the Zambian bishops' conference for three separate terms: 1972-1975, 1988-1990 and 1999-2002. Cardinal-designate Mazombwe also served as president of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa, 1979-1986.

In his efforts to allow developing countries a chance to improve their economic situations, Cardinal-designate Mazombwe participated in a church delegation that lobbied Britain in 2005 to bring to the table of a Group of

Eight meeting the issues of trade justice, improved aid packages to poor countries and cancellation of the debts of the world's 27 poorest countries.

He also spoke out against the problem of political corruption in many of those countries.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Antonios Naguib

Egyptian Cardinal-designate Antonios Naguib, 75, is the Coptic Catholic patriarch of Alexandria and leader of a church that has about 163,000 members, mainly in Egypt. The patriarch was at the Vatican when Pope Benedict XVI announced he would be a cardinal because he was serving as the recording secretary of the Synod of Bishops for the Middle East.

Born in Samalout, Egypt, he studied at the Maadi seminary outside Cairo as well as at the Pontifical Urbanian University in Rome. Ordained to the priesthood in 1960, he served as a parish priest in Fikriyah, Egypt, for a year before returning to Rome to complete degrees in theology and in Scripture.

He taught sacred Scripture at the Maadi seminary for 13 years and was elected bishop of Minya, Egypt, in 1977. He retired in 2002 and, according to the biography the Vatican press office released Oct. 20, he had "a period of rest" until he was elected patriarch of the Coptic Catholic Church in 2006. He currently serves as president of the assembly of the Catholic hierarchy of Egypt.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Robert Sarah

Cardinal-designate Robert Sarah, 65, retired archbishop of Conakry, Guinea, has been a member of the Roman Curia for several years, most of them as a leader in evangelization. Born in Ourous, Guinea, he was educated in seminaries in Guinea, France and Senegal. He earned a degree in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and another in Scripture from the Franciscan biblical institute in Jerusalem.

He was ordained in 1969, after which he served as rector of the minor seminary of Kindia in his home country and was pastor at several local parishes. He was consecrated a bishop at the age of 34 and was at the time the youngest bishop in the world.

In 2001, he was named secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the church's missionary agency, by Pope John Paul II. He was appointed president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican's charity office, Oct. 7. The office coordinates Catholic charitable giving, distributes funds in the name of the pope and identifies Catholic projects that need special help.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Jose Estepa Llaurens

Spanish Cardinal-designate Jose Estepa Llaurens, 84, is the retired military ordinary of Spain and was one of the bishops who worked with then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in editing the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Over the years, he also served as a consultant, and later member, of the Congregation for Clergy and as a member of the council of military ordinaries under the Congregation for Bishops.

Born in Andujar, he studied in Salamanca, Rome and Paris and was ordained to the priesthood in 1954. In 1972,

Pope Paul VI named him an auxiliary bishop of Madrid, where he served for 11 years as rector of the archdiocesan seminary.

In 1983, he was named an archbishop and head of the military ordinariate for Spain. He retired in 2003 but continues to serve as a chaplain to retired Spanish veterans and is the grand prior of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem in western Spain.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Raymundo Damasceno Assis

Brazilian Cardinal-designate Raymundo Damasceno Assis, 73, is the archbishop of Aparecida and president of the Latin American bishops' council, or CELAM.

Born in Capela Nova, he studied at the archdiocesan seminary in Mariana before going to Rome to study theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He did further studies in catechesis at the catechetical institute in Munich and in the philosophy of science at the University of Brasilia.

Ordained to the priesthood in 1968 and incardinated in the Archdiocese of Brasilia, he taught at the major seminary and at the University of Brasilia. He worked in parishes and served as vicar general of the archdiocese.

In 1986, Pope John Paul II named him an auxiliary bishop of Brasilia. He served as general secretary of the Latin American bishops' council, 1991-95, and as secretary-general of the Brazilian bishops' conference, 1995-98 and 1999-2003.

Pope John Paul named him archbishop of Aparecida in 2004. Within the Brazilian bishops' conference, he serves as president of the economic council and president of the commission for evangelization.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Walter Brandmuller

German Cardinal-designate Walter Brandmuller, 81, is the retired president of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences. He is the author or co-author of several books dealing with church history and, particularly, books that try to place some of the darker moments of church history in perspective. For example, his book, "Light and Shadows: Church History Amid Faith, Fact and Legend," published in English in 2009, tackled topics such as the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Reformation and the Renaissance popes. He co-authored the German book, "The Fall of Galileo and Other Errors: Power, Faith and Science."

Born in Ansbach, he was ordained in 1953 for the Archdiocese of Bamberg. He earned a doctorate in theology in 1963 and completed a post-doctoral specialization in the history of the church in 1967 at Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich. He taught there for two years before becoming a professor of church history at an institute for theological and philosophical studies in Dillingen. From 1971 to 1997, he taught medieval and modern church history at the University of Augsburg. For most of that period, he also served as pastor of a parish in Walleshausen.

From 1998 to 2009, he served as president of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences. He also is one of the world's experts on the history of the church councils and was one of the founders and director of an annual journal of historical articles on the councils.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

Cardinal-designate Raul Vela Chiriboga

Cardinal-designate Raul Vela Chiriboga, 76, retired archbishop of Quito, Ecuador, headed the country's military diocese for 14 years.

He was born in Riobamba, Ecuador, and attended the local Salesian high school before studying philosophy and theology at San Jose major seminary in Quito.

He was ordained in 1957 and named auxiliary bishop of Guayaquil in 1972. That same year he was consecrated bishop and, from 1972 to 1975, he served as secretary-general of the Ecuadorean bishops' conference.

In 1975, he was transferred to serve as bishop of Azogues, and in 1989, he was named to head the military ordinariate of Ecuador. While serving in that capacity, he also worked with the bishops' economic affairs council, 1996-1999.

Pope John Paul II named him archbishop of Quito in 2003, a post he held until September.

NCR's main story: Wuerl and Burke among 24 new cardinals [1]

More about the new cardinals:

- **Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 1** [2]
- **Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 2** [3]
- **Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 3** [4]
- **Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 4 and last** [5]

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[1] http://ncronline.org/node/20856
[2] http://ncronline.org/node/20860
[3] http://ncronline.org/node/20864
[4] http://ncronline.org/node/20872
[5] http://ncronline.org/node/20892