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Pope names bishops for Mississippi, Texas dioceses

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Press Release from the U.S. bishops' conference:

Pope Names Bishops for Mississippi, Texas Dioceses

December 12, 2013

WASHINGTON?Pope Francis has named Father Joseph R. Kopacz, 63, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton and pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania, as bishop of Jackson, Mississippi, and accepted the resignation of Bishop Joseph Latino,76, from the pastoral governance of the Jackson diocese. The pope also named Msgr. Michael J. Sis, 53, vicar general of the Diocese of Austin, Texas, as bishop of San Angelo, Texas, and accepted the resignation of Bishop Michael Pfeifer, 76, from the pastoral governance of the San Angelo diocese.

The appointments were publicized in Washington, December 12, by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Bishop-elect Kopacz was born September 16, 1950, in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, and ordained a priest for the Scranton diocese on May 7, 1977. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in history from the University of Scranton; a master?s degree in Latin from Fordham University; a master?s degree in theology from Christ the King Seminary, Buffalo; a master?s degree in counseling and psychology from Marywood University, Scranton, and a Ph.D. in human development from Marywood University.

Assignments after ordination included 1977-1979, parochial vicar, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, in Brodheadsville, and Epiphany Parish in Sayre, Pennsylvania, and administrator of St. Patrick?s Parish in Nicholson, Pennsylvania; 1980-1990, teacher, St. Pius X Seminary; 1989-1995, pastor, St. Michael, St. James, and St. Stanislaus parishes, Jessup, Pennsylvania; 1995-1998, pastor, Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Scranton; 1998-2002, director of formation, St. Pius X Seminary; 2002-2006, pastor, Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary Parish, Scranton; 2005-2009, vicar for clergy and vicar general , Scranton Diocese; and 2006-present, pastor, Most Holy Trinity.

The Jackson diocese includes 37,643 square miles across 65 counties in Mississippi. It has a population of 2,111,593 people, with 47,724, or two percent of them, Catholic.

Bishop-elect Sis was born January 9, 1960, in Mt. Holly, New Jersey. He was ordained for the Austin diocese on July 19, 1986.

He holds a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from the University of Notre Dame, a bachelor?s degree in theology from the Gregorian University, and a licentiate in moral theology from the Academia Alfonsiana, Pontifical Lateran University, Rome.

Assignments after ordination included 1986-1988, associate pastor, Christo Rey Church, Austin; 1989, associate pastor in campus ministry, St. Mary?s Student Center, College Station, Texas; 1990-1992, associate pastor, St. Mary?s Cathedral, Austin; 1992, associate pastor, St. Mary?s Student Center; 1993-2006, pastor, St. Mary?s Student Center; 2006-2009, vocation director, Austin Diocese; 2009-2010, pastor, St. Thomas More Church, Austin; and 2010-present, vicar general and moderator of the curia, Austin diocese.

The San Angelo diocese includes 37,433 square miles across 29 counties in Texas. It has a population of 859,701 people, with 77,230, or nine percent of them, Catholic.

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