NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Pope Francis appoints Texas priest to head Pueblo diocese in Colorado

Catholic News Service | Jan. 15, 2014
Washington

Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Stephen Berg, a priest of the diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, to head the diocese of Pueblo, Colo.

Berg, who is 62, succeeds Bishop Fernando Isern, who resigned in June for health reasons.

The appointment was announced Wednesday in Washington by Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, the Vatican's nuncio to the United States.

The Texas priest is currently serving as diocesan administrator in Fort Worth and will continue in the post until Bishop-designate Michael Olson is ordained a bishop and installed to head that diocese Jan. 29.

Berg will be ordained and installed Feb. 27 by Denver Archbishop Samuel Aquila at a Mass to be celebrated in Pueblo.

"My heart is filled with joy," the archbishop said in a statement about the appointment of the fifth bishop of the diocese, which covers the southern and western part of Colorado. "The church will be enriched by his enthusiastic and energetic presence, and I am sure that the faithful will appreciate his love for Colorado."

Aquila said Berg "brings with him the experience of a rich family life, a love for music and experience in both the corporate and ecclesial spheres that will serve him and the Diocese of Pueblo well."

Berg said in a statement he was "humbled and deeply moved" by Pope Francis' appointment.

"I know Colorado to be a beautiful land of beautiful people and I look forward to serving the faithful of Pueblo as their shepherd in Christ. I eagerly anticipate our future together as we grow and build our local church, he said.

He thanked the priests, deacons, religious, staff and the faithful "for their care of the diocese and love of their faith."

Bishop Michael Sheridan of Colorado Springs, Colo., has been apostolic administrator of the Pueblo diocese since Isern's resignation.

Born March 3, 1951, the oldest of 10 children, Berg is a native of Miles City, Mont. He attended Catholic elementary school and high school in Miles City, which is in the diocese of Great Falls-Billings.

He has bachelor of music degree in piano performance from the University of Colorado in Boulder and a master's degree in music from Eastern New Mexico University in Portales.

Before he became a priest, he taught music at Tarrant County College in Fort Worth. Subsequently, he worked

14 years in the retail nursery industry as vice president or general manager for divisions of Sunbelt Nursery Inc. in Fort Worth, Southern California, Phoenix and Atlanta.

In 1993, he entered Assumption Seminary in San Antonio. He received a master of divinity degree from Oblate School of Theology in 1999.

He was ordained a priest of the Fort Worth diocese in 1999 by his maternal uncle, now-retired Bishop Joseph Charron of Des Moines, Iowa.

After ordination, then-Father Berg had assignments as parochial vicar at two different parishes. From 2002 to 2008, he was pastor of four rural Texas parishes.

For the next four years, he was vicar general of the Fort Worth diocese and also pastor of St. Peter the Apostle Parish in Fort Worth. In 2012, he was named moderator of the curia and appointed parochial administrator of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, also in Fort Worth.

In December 2012, he was elected diocesan administrator by the diocesan college of consultors, after Fort Worth's bishop, Bishop Kevin Vann, was installed to head the diocese of Orange, Calif.

Olson called Berg "a good priest, a kind man, a true Christian and a wise leader."

In a statement he said the entire Fort Worth diocese was "very proud and joyful" that one of their own was appointed a bishop.

"I personally am happy for him and the Diocese of Pueblo," he said, adding that Berg's experience as pastor, vicar general and diocesan administrator "has prepared him for his new assignment."

The Pueblo diocese encompasses 48,000 square miles and has a Catholic population of approximately 64,000 out of a total population of about 667,000. The 72-year-old diocese has 53 parishes, 44 missions and four Catholic schools.

Source URL (retrieved on *11/30/2015 - 13:23*): http://ncronline.org/news/faith-parish/pope-francis-appoints-texas-priest-head-pueblo-diocese-colorado