

Texas seminary rector named bishop of Shreveport

WASHINGTON – The rector of Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, Texas, Monsignor Michael G. Duca, has been named bishop of Shreveport, La., by Pope Benedict XVI.

The appointment was announced April 1 by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Bishop-designate Duca, a native of Dallas, was ordained a priest of the Dallas Diocese April 29, 1978, and has been seminary rector since Aug. 1, 1996.

He will become the second bishop of Shreveport. No date has been set yet for his episcopal ordination and installation.

The diocese has been vacant since Bishop William B. Friend retired Dec. 20, 2006. Monsignor Earl V. Provenza has been serving as administrator.

Bishop Friend was named bishop of Alexandria-Shreveport in 1982 and first bishop of Shreveport when it was split off from Alexandria to form a separate diocese in 1986.

Bishop-designate Duca, 55, said in a statement he was “humbled and honored” by the pope’s appointment.

“It is an incredible blessing that I look forward to, but not without some mixed emotions,” he said.

“My 30 years as a priest in the Diocese of Dallas have been a very enriching experience,” he added. “The opportunity to serve in parishes and to work with the future priests of our diocese as rector of Holy Trinity Seminary has helped me to grow as a minister and person.”

Bishop Kevin J. Farrell of Dallas said his diocese has benefited much from Bishop-designate Duca’s “ministry, his leadership and his many other talents.”

"I will miss his support here but I am pleased the Diocese of Shreveport is getting such a strong and capable spiritual leader," he said in a statement. "We will pray for his success and happiness."

Michael Gerard Duca was born June 5, 1952, and attended elementary and secondary school in Dallas.

He attended Holy Trinity Seminary 1970-78, and while there received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master of divinity degree in theology from the University of Dallas. The seminary and the university are collaborative institutions; the campuses are next to one another. The university grants degrees to seminarians.

After several pastoral assignments, Bishop-designate Duca also was a campus minister at Southern Methodist University and Dallas diocesan vocations director both from 1985 to 1992.

From 1994 to 1996, he studied canon law at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. When he returned to Dallas, he was named seminary rector.

The Shreveport Diocese has 16 counties. It covers about 22,000 square miles of northern Louisiana, a largely rural area in the middle of the Bible Belt. It has a Catholic population of about 39,000 out of a total population of 789,000.