



Diocese of Austin
6225 Highway 290 East • Austin, TX 78723
www.austindiocese.org • (512) 949-2400

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Contact: Christian R. González
Communications Director
(512) 949-2456
christian-gonzalez@austindiocese.org

Wack appointed Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee

AUSTIN – We announce with great joy that Pope Francis has appointed Holy Cross Father Bill Wack, pastor of St. Ignatius Martyr Parish in Austin, as the sixth Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Florida.

“With joy I received the good news of Pope Francis’ appointment of Holy Cross Father William Wack as the new bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee,” said Austin Bishop Joe S. Vásquez. I know the faithful of Pensacola-Tallahassee are excited to receive their new shepherd. Father Wack is an exemplary priest who is well-respected by his brother priests and loved by those he serves. Father Wack has been of great help to me, and I express my deep appreciation to him for his years of service in the Diocese of Austin. As the people of Pensacola-Tallahassee come to know him, they will see his love for the Church and his desire to serve his flock with warmth and compassion. I offer my prayers for Bishop-elect Wack and the faithful of Pensacola-Tallahassee.”

Bishop-elect Wack will hold a press conference today in Pensacola and a second press conference at the Diocese of Austin Pastoral Center on June 1 at 3 p.m.

Bishop-elect Wack will succeed Bishop Gregory L. Parkes who was appointed as Bishop of St. Petersburg, Florida, on Nov. 28, 2016, by Pope Francis.

The date for the episcopal ordination and installation of Bishop-elect Wack has not been set.

Background information

William “Bill” Wack was born June 28, 1967, in South Bend, Indiana. He is the ninth of 10 children, born to Dr. James and Alice Wack, in South Bend, Indiana. He attended Christ the King Catholic Grade School, and then went on to LaSalle High School (public). He pursued an undergraduate degree in Government, starting at Holy Cross College and receiving his degree from the University of Notre Dame. His brother, Neil, is also a Holy Cross priest, serving as the Director of Vocations for the U.S. Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Father Bill entered the seminary at the University of Notre Dame in August 1985. During his formation he ministered in detention centers, a prison, homeless shelters, AIDS Services of Austin, and among the people of the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. He professed his final vows on Aug. 28, 1993, and was ordained a transitional deacon the next day. He was ordained a priest on April 9, 1994, by Holy Cross Archbishop James McDonald in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Notre Dame.

Before coming to the Diocese of Austin, Father Wack served three years as an associate pastor at Sacred Heart Parish in Colorado Springs. Then he served five years as the associate director of vocations for the Congregation of Holy Cross Indiana Province, while assisting in campus ministry at Notre Dame. After that he spent six years as the director of Andre House, a center for the homeless in Phoenix, Arizona. In July 2009, Father Wack was appointed pastor of St. Ignatius Martyr Parish in Austin. He has also served as a member of the Diocesan Advisory School Board, Dean of the Austin Central Deanery and as a member of the Presbyteral Council.

The Austin Diocese (www.austindiocese.org) covers 25 counties in Central Texas and includes approximately 550,000 Catholics in 126 parishes, missions and student centers. The Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese covers the 18 counties of northwestern Florida and includes 67,000 Catholics in 50 parishes and 9 missions.