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Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, left, retired archbishop of Galveston-Houston, is seen at the Pontifical

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, left, retired archbishop of Galveston-Houston, is seen at the Pontifical North American College in Rome May 6, 2025. Bishop Patrick J. Zurek Amarillo, Texas, right, arrives in the crypt of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 20, 2020. (OSV News photos/Kendall McLaren, Paul Haring)



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Pope Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of Bishop Patrick Zurek of Amarillo, 77, and has appointed retired Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, 76, as apostolic administrator of the diocese until a new bishop is appointed and installed.

The resignation and appointment were publicized in Washington by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, on Feb. 14.

Zurek is a native of Sealy, Texas and has served as head of the Diocese of Amarillo since his installation in February 2008. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Austin, Texas, in 1975, and served as auxiliary bishop in San Antonio since 1998.

Born Aug. 17, 1948, Patrick Zurek was raised on his family's farm. He attended local schools and received a bachelor's degree in math and chemistry from the University of Houston. He went on to the Seminary of St. Mary, the University of St. Thomas in Houston and the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He later earned a licentiate in moral theology at the Alphonsian Academy in Rome.

Zurek currently serves on the USCCB committee developing the New Spanish Bible. He continues to serve on the committee of border bishops organized to consider pastoral initiatives and immigration issues.

DiNardo served as archbishop of Galveston-Houston until his resignation was accepted in January 2025. He had headed the Texas archdiocese since 2006. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI elevated him to the College of Cardinals. On May 23, 2024, he turned 75, the age at which canon law requires bishops to submit their resignation to the pope. The cardinal is a former president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

DiNardo had told reporters last year that he will remain in the Houston area in retirement — which, he noted, does not mean he is retired as a cardinal. "That holds on until I'm 80," he said, adding that he will be "very happy" to assist his successor in whatever he asks him to do.

An Ohio native who was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, then-Archbishop DiNardo succeeded Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza as Galveston-Houston's shepherd on Feb. 28, 2006. Two years earlier he had been named coadjutor bishop (later coadjutor archbishop) of Galveston-Houston in January 2004.

Before his Texas appointment, DiNardo was the bishop of Sioux City, Iowa. He was appointed coadjutor bishop of Sioux City and ordained there as a bishop in October 1997. As his episcopal motto he adopted: "*Ave Crux Spes Unica*," meaning "Hail the Cross, Our Only Hope." He succeeded retiring Bishop Lawrence Soens as head of the diocese in November 1998.

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