



## DIOCESE OF AMARILLO

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January 3, 2008  
Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

### **For Immediate Release:**

During this holy and blessed Christmas season, God has blessed us immensely with special gifts: two announcements.

**The first announcement**, of lesser importance: His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has accepted my resignation as Bishop of Amarillo effective today January 3, 2008. I am humbly grateful to the late Roman Pontiff John Paul II for the trust placed in me by appointing me to the See of Amarillo January 21, 1997.

Today, I also wish to express my gratitude to our present Holy Father Benedict XVI for his confidence in me continuing as Diocesan Bishop these 15 months after my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, October 2, 2006. I praise God and thank Him and each of you for the privilege of serving you these years for the sake of Jesus and His Church in building His Kingdom. I have loved and enjoyed my tenure as Bishop of Amarillo. For this I thank each and every one of you. Thank you. May God Bless You!

**The second announcement**, of greater importance, is the announcement today by His Holiness Benedict XVI of the new Bishop of Amarillo. Your new Bishop is a native

Texan who received his seminary formation and studies in Rome; he served his people zealously as a pastor and in other assignments in the Diocese of Austin; your new Diocesan Bishop has been a bishop for ten years; he speaks Spanish fluently and has great experience in evangelizing, shepherding, teaching, sanctifying, and serving the People of God.

He has many years of fruitful experience in mission work in Honduras in a joint collaboration with the Diocese of Amarillo. Both as a priest and a bishop, your new diocesan pastor has been committed to Pro-Life Ministry. In these turbulent last few years for the Catholic Church, nationally and locally, your new shepherd has earned through experience a reputation for his respected, ecclesial, and pastoral relationship with all, especially the presbyterate of his former Archdiocese of San Antonio.

We are grateful to God, our eternal shepherd and guide, for hearing our prayer: “in your mercy grant your Church (the Diocese of Amarillo) a shepherd who will walk in your ways and whose watchful care will bring us your blessing”. We express our thanks also to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of the Holy Eucharist, St. Laurence (Patron of our Diocese), and all the saints for their intercession.

May all the People of God join me in prayerfully thanking His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the appointment of our new bishop of the Diocese of Amarillo, and please join me in welcoming His Excellency, the Most Reverend Patrick J. Zurek.

*+ John W. Genta*  
*Apostolic Administrator*