



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Resignations and Appointments

Resignation of bishop of Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia en Higüey, Dominican Republic, and appointment of successor

Erection of the ecclesiastical province of Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo, and appointment of first metropolitan archbishop

Erection of the ecclesiastical province of Owando, Republic of the Congo, and appointment of first metropolitan archbishop

Appointment of auxiliary of Umuahia, Nigeria

Resignation of bishop of Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia en Higüey, Dominican Republic, and appointment of successor

The Holy Father has accepted the resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia en Higüey, Dominican Republic, presented by Bishop Gregorio Nicanor Peña Rodríguez.

The Holy Father has appointed as Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia en Higüey, Dominican Republic, Bishop Jesús Castro Marte, transferring him from the titular see of Giufi and from the office of auxiliary of Santo Domingo.

Bishop Jesús Castro Marte

Bishop Jesús Castro Marte was born on 8 March 1966 in Guerra, archdiocese of Santo Domingo.

He carried out his studies in philosophy and theology at the Pontifical Catholic University *Madre y Maestra* of the

archdiocese of Santiago de los Caballeros. He was awarded a licentiate in bioethics from the Pontifical Athenaeum “Regina Apostolorum” in Rome. He attended various courses in religious sciences at the *Santo Tomás de Aquino* Pontifical Seminary of the archdiocese of Santo Domingo, and in human resources at the Pontifical Catholic University *Madre y Maestra* of the archdiocese of Santiago de los Caballeros.

Bishop Castro Marte was ordained a priest on 13 June 1995, and incardinated in the archdiocese of Santo Domingo.

From 1995 to 1997 he served as parish vicar of *San Antonio de Padua* and *Santa Lucía Mártir* in La Victoria; from 2001 to 2004 parish priest of the parishes of San José, Cristo Rey del Universo and Madre de Dios in the zone of Yamasá, Monte Plata; from 2004 to 2006 he continued his studies at the Pontifical Athenaeum “Regina Apostolorum” in Rome.

He subsequently taught at the Pontifical Catholic University *Madre y Maestra* in the archdiocese of Santiago de los Caballeros. From 2008 to 2012 he served as episcopal vicar for the clergy and executive secretary of the presbyteral council of the archdiocese of Santo Domingo; from 2009 to 2010, parish priest of *San Ignacio de Loyola*; and from 2010 to 2012, parish priest of *San Juan Bautista de la Salle*. From 2011 to 2013 he was vice-rector of the *Santo Tomás de Aquino* Pontifical Seminary, and from 2013, rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Santo Domingo. On 1 July 2017, he was appointed as titular bishop of Giufi and auxiliary of Santo Domingo.

Erection of the ecclesiastical province of Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo, and appointment of first metropolitan archbishop

The Holy Father has erected the ecclesiastical province of Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo, at the same time elevating the diocese in question to a metropolitan Church; it will have as suffragan Churches the dioceses of Dolisie and Nkayi, and has appointed Bishop **Miguel Ángel Olaverri Arroniz, S.D.B.**, of Pointe-Noire, as metropolitan archbishop.

The new ecclesiastical province of Pointe-Noire in the Republic of the Congo will have as suffragans the dioceses of Dolisie and Nkayi. It will also be called the *Ecclesiastical Province of the South-West*.

Data relating to the dioceses of the new ecclesiastical province:

Diocese	Pointe-Noire	Dolisie	Nkayi
Area (Km2)	14,644	25,942	33,310
Population	1,622,400	226,800	581,000
Catholics	958,900	76,700	353,700
Parishes	35	15	16
Diocesan priests	59	34	38
Religious priests	29	2	0
Men religious	29	16	6
Women religious	59	20	25
Seminarians	53	16	31

Erection of the ecclesiastical province of Owando, Republic of the Congo, and appointment of first metropolitan archbishop

The Holy Father has erected the ecclesiastical province of Owando, Republic of the Congo, elevating it to a metropolitan Church; and assigning as suffragan Churches the dioceses of Impfondo and Ouessou, and has appointed Bishop **Victor Abagna Mossa** of the same see as metropolitan archbishop.

The new ecclesiastical province of Owanda in the Republic of the Congo will have as suffragans the dioceses of Impfondo and Ouessou. It will also be called the *Ecclesiastical Province of the North*.

Data relating to the dioceses of the new ecclesiastical province:

(data from the Pontifical Yearbook 2020)

Diocese	Owando	Impfondo	Ouessou
Area (Km ²)	75,450	66,045	56,800
Population	464,200	325,800	113,400
Catholics	338,000	93,300	25,500
Parishes	22	10	6
Diocesan priests	59	15	24
Religious priests	5	3	2
Men religious	24	6	2
Women religious	30	12	20
Seminarians	21	16	11

Appointment of auxiliary of Umuahia, Nigeria

The Holy Father has appointed as auxiliary of the diocese of Umuahia, Nigeria, the Reverend Michael Kalu Ukpong of the clergy of Umuahia, currently chancellor of the same diocese and parish priest of Saint Theresa's parish, assigning him the titular Igilgili.

Reverend Michael Kalu Ukpong

The Reverend Michael Kalu Ukpong was born on 15 December 1964 in Amaekpu Ohafia, in the diocese of Umuahia. He attended the Immaculate Conception Minor Seminary in Ahiaeke (1978-1984). He carried out his studies in philosophy at the Seat of Wisdom Major Seminary in Owerri (1985-1993) and in theology at the Saint Joseph Major Seminary in Ikot Ekpene (1989-1993). He studied canon law at the *Klaus-Mörsdorf-Institut für Kanonistik* at the *Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität* in Munich (2006-2007) and then theology at the University of Regensburg, where he was awarded a doctorate 2008-2014).

He was ordained a priest on 7 August 1993 for the clergy of the diocese of Umuahia.

Since priestly ordination he has held the following offices: parish vicar at Saint Finbarr's parish in Umuahia (1993-1994); secretary to the bishop of Umuahia (1994-1996); parish priest *ad item* at Saint John's parish (1996-1999); editor of the *Lumen Newspaper*, of the diocese of Umuahia (1999-2001); and chaplain at the Christ the King Chaplaincy in Umudike (2001-2003). From 2004 to 2014 he carried out his higher studies in Germany, also serving as parish vicar of Saint Joseph's parish in Reinhausen in the diocese of Regensburg, Germany (2008-2011); parish vicar of the Assumption parish in Ascholtshausen, diocese of Regensburg, Germany (2011-2013);

parish vicar of the *Berathausen-Pfraundorf* parish unit, diocese of Regensburg, Germany (2013-2016); head of the Coronata Secondary School in Asaga Ohafia (2016-2018); and chancellor of the diocese of Umuahia and parish priest of Saint Theresa's parish in Umuahia (since 2018).
