

**REMARKS OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE  
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**INSTALLATION OF THE MOST REV. JOE S. VÁSQUEZ  
AS NINTH BISHOP AND THIRD ARCHBISHOP OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON  
CO-CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART – HOUSTON, TEXAS  
MARCH 25, 2025**

My dear brother Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops; priests, deacons, and consecrated women and men; all the faithful of this Archdiocese as well as distinguished guests and visitors; dear friends: Greetings! It is my privilege to convey to you the spiritual closeness and affection of the Holy Father Pope Francis. Thank you for your many prayers for him during his illness and hospitalization, and please continue to pray for him.

Cardinal DiNardo: Thank you for your many faithful years as a Bishop, including the last 21 years in this local Church – I believe the anniversary of your installation as Coadjutor Bishop is tomorrow. Thank you for your life of priestly ministry, and for your ongoing service to the Holy Father and the Church as a Cardinal. Many blessings to you as you begin this time of retirement.

Archbishop-designate Vásquez: True to your episcopal motto, “*Sígueme*”, you have followed the Lord – first to the priesthood, then to the episcopate, and now, back to this local Church to be its Archbishop. While this Archdiocese has grown since you were last here, and while much has changed, what has *not* changed is the love and fidelity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the One who calls you. As Pope Francis wrote at the beginning of his encyclical letter on the Sacred Heart: “‘He loved us’...in order to make us realize that nothing can ever ‘separate us’ from that love.”<sup>1</sup>

As you stand here in the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, you can be reminded that your ability to follow Christ faithfully is guaranteed by His own love for you, which will never fail.

As you begin your ministry as Archbishop, you also enjoy the special grace of this Jubilee Year. Together with the people of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston—all of the baptized, the clergy and those in consecrated life—you will walk together as “pilgrims in hope”. As their fellow pilgrim and as their shepherd, I know that your wisdom, which comes from your own personal encounter with Christ, as well as from your fidelity to the fruits of the Holy Father’s discernment, will help the people of God to continue searching new pathways for the spread of the Gospel in this present age.

May God bless you in these coming days and weeks as you listen, learn, and become one with the people of this Archdiocese, and as you lead them on our shared pilgrimage of hope.

I will now read an English translation of the official letter of appointment from the Holy Father.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos* on the Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ, 24 October 2024, 1; cf. *Romans* 8:37, 39).