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Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of 69-year-old Auxiliary Bishop Alexander Salazar of Los Angeles after the archdiocese's independent Clergy Misconduct Oversight Board recommended he not be allowed to minister because of an allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor in the 1990s.

The Vatican announced Dec. 19 that Pope Francis had accepted his resignation, although the Vatican did not explain the reason for his stepping down.

In a letter to the people of the archdiocese, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez said, "I regret to inform you that in 2005, a year after he had been ordained a bishop, the archdiocese was made aware of an allegation against Bishop Salazar of misconduct with a minor."

The allegation "was never directly reported to the archdiocese," he said, but "it was investigated by law enforcement in 2002 and the district attorney did not prosecute."

Bishop Salazar has consistently denied the allegation.

"Since he was a bishop at the time the allegation was received, the archdiocese referred the matter to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Holy See, which conducted an investigation and imposed certain precautionary measures on

the ministry of Bishop Salazar," Archbishop Gomez said.

Without providing details, a separate statement from the archdiocese said the doctrinal congregation "investigated and permitted Bishop Salazar to remain in ministry subject to certain precautionary conditions, which he has respected."

The statement added, "The archdiocese has not received any other allegations involving Bishop Salazar."

As part of a process to update a list of accused priests issued in 2004, Archbishop Gomez had asked the Clergy Misconduct Oversight Board to review all allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors.

The archdiocese specified that Archbishop Gomez requested and received permission from the Vatican Congregation for Bishops to have the oversight board include a review of the past allegation against Bishop Salazar.

The board, it said, "found the allegation to be credible and recommended to Archbishop Gomez that Bishop Salazar should not have faculties to minister. Archbishop Gomez accepted the recommendation and submitted it to the Holy See."

"I am grateful for the Holy Father's loving concern for the family of God here in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles," Archbishop Gomez said. "These decisions have been made out of deep concern for the healing and reconciliation of abuse victims and for the good of the church's mission. Let us continue to stay close to victim-survivors of abuse through our prayers and actions."

Born in San Jose, Costa Rica, Nov. 28, 1949, Alexander Salazar came to the United States with his family in 1953 and settled in Los Angeles. He became a U.S. citizen at age 18.

Educated in Catholic elementary and high schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, he studied at California State University, Los Angeles and at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, where he earned a bachelor's degree in bilingual studies in 1978.

After college, he taught at St. Albert the Great School in Compton, California, from 1968 to 1979 and worked as a bookkeeper for St. Albert the Great Parish.

In 1977, he began studies at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo and was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles June 16, 1984.

As a priest, then-Father Salazar served at St. Gregory the Great Parish in Whittier; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Pasadena; and St. Vibiana Cathedral in Los Angeles.

He was named temporary administrator of St. Teresa of Avila in 1994 and became pastor in 1995. In 2003, he was appointed vice chancellor while continuing as pastor of St. Teresa of Avila.

St. John Paul II named him an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and he received his episcopal ordination Nov. 4, 2004.

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