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Thumbnail bios of new cardinals -- part 1

by Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY -- Following are thumbnail bios of some of the 24 new cardinals announced by Pope Benedict XVI Oct. 20 at the Vatican:

Cardinal-designate Raymond L. Burke

Cardinal-designate Raymond L. Burke, 62, is prefect of the Vatican's highest tribunal, the Supreme Court of the Apostolic Signature. While the court's work is generally shrouded in secrecy, when it comes to moral and political issues -- especially abortion and same-sex marriage -- Cardinal-designate Burke is one of the most-outspoken U.S. bishops.

Before the November 2008 U.S. presidential election, he said the Democratic Party "risks transforming itself definitively into a 'party of death.'"

In 2004, he was the first U.S. bishop to say publicly that he would withhold Communion from Catholic politicians with voting records that contradicted church teaching on fundamental moral issues.

He was serving as archbishop of St. Louis when Pope Benedict XVI named him head of the Apostolic Signature in 2008.

A canon lawyer, the cardinal-designate worked for the court from 1989 to 1994 and was named a member of the body in July 2006. He also served on the Roman Rota, the church's central appeals court, before being named bishop of La Crosse, Wis., in 1994.

A native of Richland Center in the Diocese of La Crosse, Wis., he did his college and theological studies at Wisconsin's Holy Cross Seminary, The Catholic University of America in Washington and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest June 29, 1975, by Pope Paul VI in St.

Peter's Basilica.

He returned to Gregorian University from 1980 to 1984 to study canon law and taught there as a visiting professor of canon law from 1984 to 1994, when he was appointed bishop of La Crosse. After serving La Crosse for eight years, he was appointed archbishop of St. Louis in 2003.

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Cardinal-designate Donald W. Wuerl

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Cardinal-designate Donald W. Wuerl of Washington, 69, is known for his commitment to promoting Catholic religious education and Catholic schools. As head of the archdiocese that includes the U.S. capital, he also has been a leader in defending Catholic values in public life.

In November 2009, he was one of more than 140 Christian leaders who signed the "Manhattan Declaration," pledging renewed zeal in defending the unborn, defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman and protecting religious freedom.

Within the U.S. bishops' conference, he serves as chairman of the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, chairman-elect of the Committee on Doctrine and chairman of the board of the National Catholic Educational Association. He is author of the best-selling catechisms, "The Teaching of Christ" and "The Catholic Way."

Born in Pittsburgh, he holds degrees from The Catholic University of America and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and a doctorate in theology from Rome's Pontifical University of St. Thomas. After studying at Rome's North American College, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1966. Named auxiliary bishop of Seattle, he was ordained a bishop by Pope John Paul II in 1986. He resigned the position in 1987 and was named bishop of Pittsburgh in 1988. He was named to Washington in 2006.

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Cardinal-designate Angelo Amato

Italian Cardinal-designate Angelo Amato is the 72-year-old prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes. A Salesian, he worked closely with then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. After years as a consultant to the doctrinal congregation, in 2002 he was named secretary of the office then headed by the future pope.

He was one of the principal drafters of the doctrinal congregation's 2000 statement, "Dominus Iesus," which underscored the unique and universal salvation offered by Christ through his church.

Since Pope Benedict XVI named him prefect of the saints' congregation in 2008, Cardinal-designate Amato has traveled the world presiding over beatification ceremonies.

Born in Molfetta, he was ordained a priest in 1967. He holds a licentiate in philosophy from the Pontifical Salesian University and a doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

He taught dogmatic theology at the Salesian University, served as dean of the theology faculty and as vice

rector of the university, 1997-2000.

He also served as secretary of the Pontifical Academy of Theology and as a consultant to the pontifical councils for Christian unity and for interreligious dialogue.

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Cardinal-designate Kurt Koch

Swiss Cardinal-designate Kurt Koch, 60, has been president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and president of the Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews since July.

The former bishop of Basel, Switzerland, and former president of the Swiss bishops' conference had been a member of the pontifical council since 2002 and had served on the international Catholic-Orthodox theological commission and the international Catholic-Lutheran dialogue commission.

Born in Emmebrucke, he was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Basel in 1982. He studied at Lucerne University and at the University of Munich. After three years' service in a parish in Bern, he began teaching at Lucerne, eventually becoming rector of the theological faculty in 1995.

Following special traditional procedures, he was elected bishop of Basel by the priests of the cathedral chapter in August 1995, and Pope John Paul II confirmed the election four months later.

Shortly after arriving in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI asked then-Archbishop Koch to give the main talks at the annual gathering of scholars who had done their doctoral research with him when he was a professor in Germany. He gave two lectures: "The Second Vatican Council: Between Tradition and Innovation," and another on the council's document on the liturgy and the liturgical reforms it launched.

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Cardinal-designate Fortunato Baldelli

Italian Cardinal-designate Fortunato Baldelli, 75, spent 43 years serving in the Vatican's diplomatic corps before Pope Benedict XVI chose him in 2009 to head the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican tribunal that deals with the most sensitive matters of conscience as well as with the practice of indulgences.

Born in Valfabbrica, he was ordained a priest in 1961 for the Diocese of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino. After earning a graduate degree in canon law, he entered the Vatican's diplomatic service in 1966, serving at Vatican embassies in Cuba and Egypt.

He worked for several years in the Vatican Secretariat of State before being named the Vatican's observer at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France.

In 1983, Pope John Paul II named him an archbishop and apostolic delegate in Angola. Two years later, he was named nuncio to Sao Tome and Principe. In 1991, he was named nuncio to the Dominican Republic and, after three years, was sent to Peru as nuncio. His diplomatic postings concluded with an unusually long term as nuncio to France, 1999-2009.

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Cardinal-designate Gianfranco Ravasi

Italian Cardinal-designate Gianfranco Ravasi, 68, is a biblical scholar who serves as president of the Pontifical Council for Culture and of the pontifical commissions for the Cultural Heritage of the Church and for Sacred Archeology.

Since 1988, Cardinal-designate Ravasi has been the host of a popular Sunday morning biblical reflection televised in Italy as part of the program, "Frontiers of the Spirit." Pope Benedict XVI chose the archbishop to write the meditations for his Good Friday Way of the Cross service in Rome's Colosseum in 2007.

Born in the northern Italian town of Merate, he was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Milan in 1966. He taught biblical exegesis at the Milan archdiocesan seminary and at another theological school in northern Italy. He served as a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission from 1985 to 1995.

In 1989, he was named prefect of Milan's Ambrosian Library, a library and museum complex originally founded in the early 1600s, which continues to house academies offering classes in a variety of classical and historical subjects.

He served as head of the library until 2007 when he was named head of the culture council.

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