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Wisconsin priest named auxiliary bishop in Bolivia

by Catholic News Service

Vatican City — Pope Benedict XVI has named a Wisconsin-born missionary, Fr. Robert H. Flock, to be an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Flock, who will celebrate his 56th birthday Nov. 4, has served at Santa Cruz Parish in the Archdiocese of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, since 1988. The parish was founded by priests from the Diocese of La Crosse, Wis., in the 1950s.

The Vatican announced the new assignment for Flock, a La Crosse priest and native of Sparta, Wis., on Wednesday.

Since 2000, Flock has served as pastor of Santa Cruz Parish and as the head of formation for young priests in the Bolivian archdiocese. He also has been vicar general of the archdiocese since 2003.

He earned a bachelor's degree in theology from St. Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, then was sent to the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He earned a license in biblical theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University and was ordained to the priesthood in 1982.

In the Diocese of La Crosse, he served in parishes in Onalaska, Marshfield and Chili before beginning his assignment in Bolivia.

The Santa Cruz Parish website said that when Flock arrived, he "immediately set to 'modernizing' the parish with computers, photocopy machines and the Internet. Since becoming pastor in 2000, he has begun an ambitious project, gradually rebuilding the parish infrastructure to respond to dynamic pastoral life of our parish as it prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary."

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