

Archdiocese of Detroit *News Advisory*

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“Mission and Delivery of Services” Prompt Changes Appointments and Announcements from the Archdiocese

Detroit’s archbishop, Cardinal Adam Maida, through his Moderator of the Curia, Monsignor John Zenz, has released the following information about various changes within the archdiocesan Central Service structure and administration.

Sister Barbara Celeskey, SJ, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Detroit since June 1990, will be retiring after several decades of service to the archdiocese in various capacities, including service as associate superintendent of schools, member and director of the Education Department, delegate for religious, and chancellor.

Appointed to replace Sister Celeskey, effective July 1, 2003, is Father Robert McClory, 39, a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, ordained in May 1999.

Father McClory holds a B.A. from Oakland University; a M.P.A. (Master of Public Administration) from Columbia University; a J.D. (Civil Law Degree) from the University of Michigan Law School; a S.T.B. (Bachelor of Sacred Theology) from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome; and a J.C.L. (Licentiate in Canon Law) from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome.

Since his ordination, Father McClory has served as associate pastor at St. Isidore Parish, Macomb; St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, Shelby Township; and for the last year, as administrative secretary to Cardinal Maida, with weekend assistance at Our Lady of the Lakes Parish, Waterford.

In his new duties as chancellor of the archdiocese, Father McClory will be the “chief secretary and record keeper” of the archdiocese, overseeing archdiocesan archives and statistical information and reporting necessary statistics for the archdiocese in its relationship to Rome. Father McClory will continue to serve as recording secretary for the Presbyteral Council and as a canonical advisor to Cardinal Maida.

Father McClory’s work will also include overseeing and coordinating the archdiocesan Consultors and Parish Support Services, which focus on financial needs of parishes that are building or renovating, selling property or making necessary repairs, etc. He will continue to reside with Cardinal Maida and offer occasional assistance as a complement to the cardinal’s personal secretary, Father Jeffrey Monforton.

Appointed assistant chancellor is Ms. Marie Wilkie, 42, the first lay woman to hold this position. Ms. Wilkie graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in social science from Madonna University and has been attending classes at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in preparation for the Master’s program. She also holds a variety of leadership positions at her home parish, the Church of the Divine Child, Dearborn. Her work experience includes 16 years as a legal assistant and computer trainer at the Detroit law firm of Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone.

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For the last four years Ms. Wilkie has served as assistant to the chancellor, her promotion gives her extended authority over many of the same issues and concerns she has currently been handling, which include serving as staff assistant to the Vicars, the Presbyteral Council, the Curia, the Program Review Committee, and coordinating special projects. One special area of focus for Ms. Wilkie is the Quinquennial Report, the five-year report due to Rome on the state of the archdiocese. She will work closely with Monsignor Zenz and Father McClory in the exercise of her daily service.

Appointed director of the Office for Priestly Life and Ministry is Monsignor Michael LeFevre, 46. Effective July 1, 2003, he will take over the Office for Clergy in addition to his new appointment as rector of the recently renovated Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament. He will be residing at the Cathedral rectory along with the rector-emeritus, Monsignor James Robinson, SSE, and will be serving clergy needs out of the Chancery office, where Bishop Kevin Britt previously worked.

Cardinal Maida appointed Monsignor LeFevre to this position after an extensive search and interview among the clergy of the archdiocese. In his new capacity, Monsignor LeFevre will be a "sounding board" for priests who wish to speak about their own personal needs. He will also be the cardinal's liaison to priests on leaves of absence and having special needs.

Monsignor LeFevre's role is primarily pastoral rather than administrative. At the same time, he will coordinate the pastor preparation process and mentoring program, as well as other opportunities for clergy education and spiritual renewal. Monsignor LeFevre will be putting together a new staff for the office in the weeks ahead.

Appointed associate director of the Finance and Administration Department is Dan Oliver, 43. Married with two sons, he is a member of St. Germaine Parish, St. Clair Shores, where he is member of the Stewardship Committee. Oliver holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Eastern Michigan University has almost 20 years experience in finance/accounting with the archdiocese.

For several months now, the consulting firm of Plante & Moran has been conducting a review of the Central Service programming and organizational structure, searching for ways to better focus the mission and delivery of services. The process has involved well over one hundred interviews of individuals within the organization and those served by the Central Service operation. There was also extensive consultation and comparison with other dioceses of comparable size.

At this point in the process, Cardinal Maida has accepted the Plante & Moran recommendation that the functions of the Christian Service Department be realigned with services currently being done with and through the Department of Parish Life and the Department of Education.

Chaplaincies as well as Justice and Peace will work under the Education Department. Social Ministry, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Catholic Relief Services, Project Life, Project Rachel and Parish Nurses will fall under the Parish Life Department.

There are 66 employees in the Department of Christian Service, which includes Refugee Resettlement and Immigration/Legal Service. The scope and direction of these areas remain under review.

The entire Central Service operation is being overhauled at the present moment and the first changes are affecting the Department of Christian Service. It is not anticipated that there will be wide-scale staff reduction, although there will undoubtedly be some changes.

One immediate change is the fact that there will no longer be a director of the Department of Christian Service. Accordingly, effective June 12, 2003, Mr. Daniel Piepszowski resigned as director of the Department of Christian Service. During the transition time, Mrs. Krista Bajoka, who has served in the department approximately 15 years, will coordinate the transition along with Ms. Catherine Wagner of Parish Life, and Monsignor John Quinn of Education. It is anticipated that all changes will be accounted for and implemented no later than September 1, 2003.

Commenting on all of the above announcements, on behalf of Cardinal Maida, Monsignor Zenz noted the following:

- “Father Robert McClory has proven himself as a most capable administrator. Although he is relatively young in the priesthood, he is well seasoned in life experience and his dual degrees in law will bring a unique perspective. He has at heart a very pastoral zeal and understanding of the needs of ‘people in the pew’ as well as the gifts and challenges of living priestly ministry in the current circumstances.”
- “Ms. Marie Wilkie has been a faithful assistant to Sister Celeskey over the last four years and I am delighted that she now has received this well-deserved distinction of being named the first lay woman to be assistant chancellor in the history of the archdiocese. Committed to her faith, she has great appreciation of the veracity and needs of the priests, parishes, and institutions of the archdiocese.”
- “Monsignor LeFevre is well known and admired by his brother priests. Having served as the personal secretary to both Cardinals Edmund Szoka and Adam Maida, he knows most of the clergy by name and has earned their respect because of his own humility, integrity, simplicity, and good humor. He will be an excellent listener, but also has very good skills at organizing in a practical way. Having served as a pastor in a large suburban parish, as well as having served in downtown administration, and having pursued a degree in canon law, Monsignor LeFevre comes well equipped for his new position. Bishop Walter Schoenherr once held a similar kind of dual appointment as rector of the cathedral and director of Clergy Services and was able to manage it well; I am sure Monsignor LeFevre will do the same!”
- “Dan Piepszowski served the Archdiocese well during the nine years he has been director of Christian Service. He was a very strong and dynamic presence of the Catholic Church, not only internally to the various social service agencies, institutions and parishes, but also to the wider civic and ecumenical communities. He has vision and energy and was always excellent at explaining the Church’s gifts and challenges. While his services will be missed, we are confident that the work of Christian Service will continue in new ways.”
- “Sister Barbara Celeskey’s career is unsurpassed — twenty-five years of service to the Church of Detroit and fifty-two years of committed service as a consecrated religious. For all that she has done over the years, in all of her various capacities and responsibilities, we owe Sister Barbara an incredible debt of gratitude. She has brought keen intelligence, memory and insight, vision and creativity, balanced judgment and a genuine compassion for the needs of all. Her opinions and ‘ecclesiastical memory’ were a great resource to the cardinal and to the archdiocese.”
- “Dan Oliver has been a valuable ‘team player’ in the Finance and Administration Department for almost 20 years. He has served in key positions inside the Chancery and has had hands-on experience with many of our parishes, schools and institutions. This is a well-deserved promotion. He will be a great asset to the department and to its director, Michael Gorman.”

There are 1.4 million Catholics in the Archdiocese of Detroit, which is comprised of 308 parishes across six counties in southeast Michigan — Lapeer, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Wayne. Central Service, with offices in Detroit at the Chancery, Gabriel Richard Building, Print Shop and Sacred Heart Major Seminary, employs 230 individuals.

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Note: Photos of Monsignor LeFevre, Father McClory, Mr. Oliver and Ms. Wilkie can be found on the Archdiocese of Detroit website at www.aodonline.org (under *News & Publications*) and at homepage.mac.com/nedmcgrath (under *Staff Changes*).