

NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Director named to lead permanent diaconate program

Theologian, author, seminary professor will begin his duties June 1

January 19, 2011 (OMAHA, NE) -- Archbishop George J. Lucas has named Deacon James Keating, Ph.D. director of the Archdiocese of Omaha permanent diaconate program.

Keating is currently the director of theological formation at the Institute of Priestly Formation (IPF), a spiritual formation center for diocesan seminarians and priests that is located on the Creighton University campus. Lucas said Keating will retain his IPF duties while coordinating formational programs for permanent deacons and diaconal candidates.

The archdiocese has had separate directors for its urban and rural permanent diaconate programs. Keating is charged with combining the two programs. He will replace the Rev. Ralph O'Donnell, the archdiocese's urban diaconate director, and the Rev. Keith Rezac, the rural diaconate director. In December, O'Donnell was named vice rector and dean of students at Immaculate Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri. Rezac is pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Pierce and St. Paul Parish in Plainview.

"Deacon Keating is an accomplished theologian," Lucas said. "He has many years of experience in diaconal ministry and in helping form others for ordained ministry. I am grateful that he has agreed to build on the solid work of Father O'Donnell and Father Rezac."

Before joining IPF, Keating taught moral and spiritual theology for 13 years in the School of Theology at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Ohio. In the field of his professional research, the interpretation of the spiritual and moral life, Keating has authored or edited ten books and dozens of essays for theological journals.

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"I am eager to assist the archbishop in implementing his vision of diaconal formation," Keating said.

Keating will work in the coming months with O'Donnell and Rezac to become more acquainted with the particulars of the permanent diaconate in the archdiocese. He will begin his duties June 1.

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Founded as a diocese in 1885, the Archdiocese of Omaha serves spiritual and human needs in a 23-county area of Northeast Nebraska. Through its 147 parishes and missions, the archdiocese reaches out to 225,000 Nebraska Catholics. With two Catholic universities, 57 elementary schools, 18 high schools and a parish-based religious education program within its boundaries, Catholic education enriches the lives of some 58,000 young people. The Archdiocese of Omaha is one of the largest private social service providers in the region. Catholic Charities and the Family Life Office lead a network that ministers to the broadest and most fundamental needs of our community. Generous support to the Annual Appeal is symbolic of the collective faith that allows the Archdiocese of Omaha to continue the mission of Jesus Christ. www.archomaha.org