

# Administrators named at 6 priests' parishes

By Teri Maddox

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BELLEVILLE — As part of its annual reassignment process, the Catholic Diocese of Belleville has named full-time administrators for six parishes where priests were removed because of allegations of sexual misconduct.

In some cases, they are replacing part-time administrators named on an emergency basis at the time of the removals, which occurred from March through May.

“When the first temporary administrators were named, they agreed to serve in that capacity until the new assignments were made,” said Sister Michelle Emmerich, vice chancellor and spokesman for Bishop James Keleher.

At a recent meeting with priests, Keleher set a goal of July 1 for completing investigations into the allegations and deciding the fate of the accused priests.

Emmerich declined to comment on whether the goal would be reached.

“The review board is continuing to meet and reviewing the allegations,” she said.

The new administrators are:

● The Rev. James Margason, formerly pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Lebanon, who will continue as administrator of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Belleville. On March 6, the Rev. Jerome Ratermann was removed from that parish.

● The Rev. Vincent Haselhorst, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Columbia, who has been named administrator of St. Boniface Parish in Germantown, effective July 20. He replaces the Rev. James Calhoun, who was removed March 18.

● Monsignor Charles Nebel, who will leave retirement July 6 to become administrator of St. Joseph Parish in Elizabethtown. He replaces the Rev. Robert Vonnahmen, who also was removed March 18.

● The Rev. Leo Reinhardt, pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Albers, who will continue as administrator of St. George Church in New Baden. On March 30, the Rev. David Crook was removed from that parish.

● The Rev. William Rowe, pastor of St. Edward Parish in Fairfield and nearby St. Sebastian Parish, has been named administrator of St. Ann Parish in Nashville, effective July 6.

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He replaces the Rev. Robert Chlopecki, who was removed April 25.

• The Rev. John Joyce, formerly parochial vicar at St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish in Belleville, who was named administrator of St. Patrick Parish in Ruma, effective June 14. The Rev. Eugene Linne-mann was on medical leave when it was announced May 8 that allegations of sexual misconduct had been made against him.

Meanwhile, parishioners at the six churches still are trying to deal with the shock and upheaval of sexual allegations while trying to keep their spiritual goals and activities on track.

At St. Joseph Parish in Elizabethtown, this has included lobbying the diocese to return Vonnahmen as their pastor.

"We're still writing," said Nina Ferrell, church trustee and longtime member. "We're still trying to get him back. We haven't stopped, and they (diocesan officials) know that. We're still as determined as ever."

The sentiment is different at St. Boniface Parish in Germantown.

"A good number of them wouldn't care to see him (Calhoun) come back," said a parishioner, who asked not to be identified. "Even if all the allegations would prove false, a lot of people would have concerns about having their children be around him."

Dave Jansen, who serves on the parish council in Germantown, said parishioners are anxious to get a full-time administrator who could provide stability and a new beginning.

Jansen said the Rev. Theodore Baumann, administrator in recent months, did a good job but was

stretched too thin between two large parishes, Jansen said.

"We've got a very well-organized parish, and everybody has pitched in and done their part," he said.

At St. Ann in Nashville, many in the congregation are frustrated with the diocese for removing Chlopecki and then, in their opinion, disappearing from the situation, said a parishioner who asked not to be identified.

"We're trying to carry on a normal life around here and it's been very difficult," the parishioner said. "There are a lot of hard feelings."

The church secretary said the diocese has instructed her not to speak with the press and refer all questions to Emmerich. A church trustee told a reporter, "We would just choose to have you people leave us alone."