

Principal leaves St. Bernard's

MONTVILLE — St. Bernard High School began looking for its second principal in three years today after an announcement from the Norwich diocese that the Rev. Robert W. Barnes, on leave from the top administrative post since June, has been assigned elsewhere.

Norwich Bishop Daniel P. Reilly, in a statement issued from the diocese communications office, said Father Barnes "will not return as principal for personal reasons."

Father Barnes already has begun duties as associate pastor at St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. He could not be reached there for comment today.

The school's Board of Trustees will set up a search committee immediately to consider candidates for the principal's job.

That appointment would be effective when the new school year begins in the fall of 1984.

Madeline J. Bergeron, who has served as the school's academic vice principal since 1980, has been named acting principal.

"Father was on leave so I really didn't know what was going to happen," she said today. "I wasn't surprised. It was just for personal reasons."

The acting principal commended Father Barnes and said they had a good working relationship. "I learned a great deal," Ms. Bergeron said. "He was a pleasure to work with."

She said the recently-granted, 10-year accreditation from the New England Association of



The Rev.
Robert
W. Barnes

Schools and Colleges was the hallmark of Father Barnes' tenure. The school was reviewed by educators last year and received its accreditation last month.

Father Barnes was ordained into the priesthood in early 1980 by Bishop Reilly. He was an associate pastor at New London's St. Mary Star of the Sea Church when he was appointed acting principal in July 1980.

Father Barnes succeeded the Rev. James G. Burbank who, after serving for two years, resigned also citing "personal reasons."

The announcement from Bishop Reilly said the membership of the search committee will be announced soon:

Ms. Bergeron said faculty and students and their parents should expect no change in the operation of the school while a successor is being selected.