

St. John Fisher College's first lay president assumes post

By Richard A. Kiley

St. John Fisher College administrators and faculty said farewell to former president Father Patrick O. Braden as a new president took the helm last week. William L. Pickett, Ph.D., is the first layman ever to assume the top administrative post at the liberal arts college, which has traditionally been run by members of the Congregation of St. Basil.

While some outside observers believe the school may be making changes in its traditional philosophies by naming its first lay president, Pickett simply calls the change a "sylistic" one.

"This does not signal any (philosophical) change at Fisher. It does say something about the state of the manpower of the Congregation of St. Basil," said Pickett, former president for university relations at the University of San Diego. The congregation was asked if it had members "prepared, ready and willing" to take on the presidential role, said Pickett. "At this time, in this circumstance," he added, "it was not going to be."

Pickett, 45, originally became aware of the opening at Fisher when colleagues from the national organization CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) nominated him for the position.

According to Pickett, he had told colleagues of his desire "to serve as a president somewhere," and indicated he was able to consider different possibilities because none of his children were entering their senior year in high school this fall.

Pickett said that Father Braden, who had served as president since 1980, has been "absolutely fantastic" in making himself available to the incoming president.

"It has been a highly harmonious transition," Pickett said of his succession to Father Braden, who left August 8 for a teaching post at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. "He wants to get back to academic life," Pickett explained.

Pickett conceded that he feels "90 percent exhilaration, 10 percent trepidation" over his as yet unfamiliar new position. He added, however, that he is encouraged by the "sacred



St. John Fisher College's new president, William L. Pickett, pauses a moment by a statue of the college's patron.

trust" he has received on behalf of the Basilian Fathers.

"Men gave their lives to this college, and the last thing I want to do is lessen what they have done or take that away," he observed. "It's the soul of the place. That's why I'm here."

Although this is the first time a Basilian Father is not in charge of the school, the congregation plans to remain committed to Fisher and closely involved with administration and faculty, according to college officials.

With the first day of classes still weeks away, Pickett said he's already discerned differences between Fisher and San Diego — other than the weather, of course.

"At San Diego, 85 percent of the students are southern Californians," he said. Students tended to come from wealthy families for whom higher education has always been a foregone conclusion. At Fisher, however, the new president noted, education seems more keenly appreciated and less taken for granted.

"The college is serving a very different clientele," remarked Pickett, who has also noticed a difference in people here in general, both inside and outside the campus environment.

"People are very friendly everywhere. There is a genuine interest in the full dimension of life," Pickett said. "The community seems very serious about the non-profit sector." The high regard the college has in the community, he added, should prove an important resource for a college president to draw on.

Pickett is temporarily living in Mercy Hall on the Fisher campus with his sons, Liam, 16, and Brendan, 14, until he and his wife, Patricia, close on a house they've found in Pittsford. Mrs. Pickett is expected to arrive August 14 with the couple's youngest child, Erin, 9, and daughter Amy, 8. The Picketts' three oldest children, Sean, Brian and Galen, are away at college.

According to her father, Erin will be enrolled in the fourth grade at Allen's Creek Elementary School in Pittsford, while Brendan and Liam will attend Pittsford-Sutherland High School. "That is subject to change, though," Pickett said. Amy plans to attend Monroe Community College.

Education department offering workshop on creative teaching

The diocesan Department of General Education is offering a "Make-It Take-It" workshop for diocesan elementary school teachers. The five-hour workshop will be presented Thursday, August 21, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Philip Neri School, Rochester.

Topics to be addressed are classroom games;

pre-kindergarten activities; creative language arts and the writing process; hands-on science activities; classroom art and bulletin board ideas; reading activities; social studies activities; and a potpourri session.

Presenters include Mary Caffrey, Gina Waters, Marilyn Celento, Douglas Kirst,

Eileen Fitzpatrick, Dolores Holtz and Shirley DiAndrea, an educational consultant for MacMillan Publishing Co. Teacher's World will display educational materials for use in the classroom.

The workshop — which is being coordinated by Evelyn Kirst, assistant superintendent of schools, and Sister Mary Smith, principal at St. Philip's — will be attended by 94 elementary teachers from the Auburn, Canandaigua and Monroe County areas.

New principals named

The following have been appointed to serve as elementary school principals for the 1986-87 school year:

MONROE COUNTY

Guardian Angels — Mrs. Catherine Kress

Holy Apostles/Holy Family — Sister Lorraine Burns, SSND

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport — Sister Margaret Mancuso, SSJ

Nazareth Hall — Sister Mary Anne Laurer, SSJ

Our Lady of Lourdes/Queen of Peace — Mr. Steven Schockow at Our Lady of Lourdes building, Sister Jean Collins;

SSJ, at Queen of Peace building St. Jerome, East Rochester — Miss Jane A. Lustyk

St. Joseph, Penfield — Sister Nancy Kelly, RSM

St. Margaret Mary — Sister Kathleen Carroll, SSJ

St. Thomas the Apostle — Miss Josephine Fama

SENECA COUNTY

St. Patrick, Seneca Falls — Mrs. Diane Macaluso

TOMPKINS COUNTY

Immaculate Conception, Ithaca — Mr. Joseph Meskill



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