

Covenant House names priest as president

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Monsignor William J. Toohy, associate executive director of Catholic Charities for the Archdiocese of New York, has been named acting president of Covenant House.

Cardinal John J. O'Connor, who had been asked by the Covenant House board to assist in finding an interim chief executive who could restore public confidence in the agency, sent the name of Monsignor Toohy to the board on March 23.

The board, with some members present at the New York headquarters of the agency and others participating by telephone, approved the cardinal's choice the next day.

At the same time, board members also approved Cardinal O'Connor's recommendation that they name as deputy acting president Monsignor Timothy A. McDonnell, pastor of Holy Trinity Church and vicar for Manhattan's West Side.

Both appointments were to become effective March 27 and extend for not more than nine months. In accordance with a condition imposed by Cardinal O'Connor, they will be paid their regular salaries by the archdiocese.

Salary levels for some of the top executives of Covenant House, including the president's salary of \$98,000, have been among the topics of public controversy.

A search committee, headed by Covenant House board chairman Ralph A. Pfeiffer Jr., has already been named to seek a permanent successor to Franciscan

Father Bruce Ritter, the agency's founder who resigned as president Feb. 27 following allegations of sexual and financial misconduct. Father Ritter has denied the charges of improper behavior.

Under an agreement reached with Father Ritter at the time of his resignation, the permanent president must be a Catholic priest, nun or brother.

Following Father Ritter's resignation, the board accepted his recommendation that James J. Harnett, who had been serving under him as vice president and chief operating officer, be named interim chief executive.

Harnett replaced Frank J. Macchiarola, a professor at the Columbia University Business School and former New York City public schools chancellor, who had been acting president since Father Ritter went on leave Feb. 6, but who had upset the priest by moving quickly to make a number of personnel and administrative changes.

Macchiarola charged that he was ousted because he was trying to bring more light into controversial areas of the agency, and critics subsequently began demanding more far-reaching changes.

The board then appealed to Cardinal O'Connor for assistance in finding someone who could gain acceptance as an independent outsider.

However, since then three New York dailies — *The New York Times*, *Newsday* and *The New York Post* — have said editorially that restoring public confidence in Covenant House will require replacing the entire board of directors. The board has not responded to the editorials.

Harnett will now return to his former position as vice president.

Monsignor Toohy brings with him a degree from the Harvard Law School and various legal experience. He is also director of legal affairs for the archdiocese.

Although Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau announced the day

after Father Ritter's resignation that he was dropping the investigation he had launched into allegations of misuse of funds, New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams has continued and expanded an investigation.

Among the items under scrutiny in the Abrams investigation is a trust fund Father Ritter set up and used to provide loans to his sister and two friends on the board, as well as expense money for himself. But required reports to the Internal Revenue Service and the state attorney general apparently were not made, and Father Ritter did not inform the board as a whole about the fund's existence.

Couple commits \$15 million to aid Vatican

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) — A San Juan Capistrano, Calif., couple has committed \$15 million to help the Vatican's financial problems, according to Cardinal John J. Krol.

Cardinal Krol, former archbishop of Philadelphia and chairman of The Papal Foundation that has set a \$100 million goal as the first step in meeting Vatican needs, announced the gift made by Arthur and Gaye Birtcher.

Cardinal Krol said that so far the foundation had received \$31 million in gifts and

pledges. The money goes into an endowment fund from which interest income each year will be allotted by the board for Vatican projects.

The Vatican faces a projected \$86 million deficit for 1990.

In announcing the Birtchers' contribution, which will be paid in installments, Cardinal Krol said "the success of The Papal Foundation will produce a lasting effect upon the life of the church until the end of time."

THE HEART OF MEDJUGORJE Pilgrimages

Books, Tapes, Videos, Newsletters, Presentations

(714) 750-7570
Nationwide: (800) 628-3440

This Year, have the Easter Bunny deliver Cookies instead of Candy!

Ideal for Birthdays, Get well wishes, and many other occasions too!



Easter orders being accepted until April 12th

2815 Baird Rd.

Fairport
385-6973



BARTOLOMEO FUNERAL HOME, INC.



Peter W. Giullari, Jr. Philip P. Perotto Michael P. Perotto

Personalized service in the community since 1922.

1425 Lexington Avenue Rochester, NY 14606

conveniently located near 390

(715) 254-5400

Papa

He's everyone's father...



That's what they call John Paul II in many languages. In fact, that's what "Pope" really means.

The Holy Father's mission is to bring the Good News of God's overpowering love to the whole world. He does this in many practical ways. When it comes to suffering people, need, not creed, is his first concern.

The Pope knows where the needs are greatest all over the world. From eastern Europe to the Middle East to India his special agency is Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

Please, send what you can to help the Holy Father care for God's children everywhere.

Catholic Near East Welfare Association

a papal agency for humanitarian and pastoral support
1011 First Avenue, New York, New York 10022-4195
212/826-1480

Dear Msgr. Stern,

I want to help the Holy Father. Here's my gift of \$ _____

Please send me information about your programs.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

4N RO 004

John Cardinal O'Connor, President • Monsignor Robert L. Stern, Secretary General