

Archbishop O'Brien to move into Basilica residence

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien and Cardinal William H. Keeler will soon have new homes.

After two years in Baltimore, the archbishop is moving from a Sulpician apartment building in North Baltimore to the archbishop's residence adjacent to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in downtown Baltimore.

Cardinal Keeler, who has lived at the archbishop's residence since arriving in Baltimore in 1989, will relocate to a Catholic retirement community in Baltimore County later this year.

The basilica residence has served as the official home of the archbishop of Baltimore since it was built in 1829. It is believed to be the oldest archbishop's residence in the United States.

"Like the basilica, the archbishop's residence is a spiritual treasure for our church and our city," Archbishop O'Brien said in an Aug. 17 statement. "The cardinal has done much to preserve and advance that history, and I look forward to following his example as visitors and guests will continue to be welcomed at the residence to share this living symbol of our Catholic heritage."

In an interview with *The Catholic Review*, Cardinal Keeler called the relocation an "excellent idea." It is fitting for the archbishop to live at the official residence since the archbishop will often host guests there, he said.

Cardinal Keeler said it has been a "wonderful experience" to live at the historic structure, a Greek revival building that also housed the administrative offices of the archdiocese until 1965. The residence also hosted the planning meetings for the church's early provincial councils, as well as regular meetings of the nation's archbishops and diplomatic receptions.

"I rode in the elevator with Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul II (at the residence)," Cardinal Keeler called. "They were very special moments."

Cardinal Keeler recalled that during Pope John Paul II's visit to Baltimore in 1995, the pope noticed that the door to an adoration chapel in the residence was closed. He asked that it be open so he could spend time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Other noteworthy visitors to the archbishop's residence include U.S. President Andrew Johnson, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Eunice Kennedy Shriver.