

Bishop Rozanski's longtime assistant calls her role 'blessed'

By Maria Wiering

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Dorothy Weidner has served as Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski's administrative assistant since he became a bishop in 2004, but their paths first crossed decades before.

She was a parishioner of St. Michael in Overlea when he was a seminarian intern there. When she moved, she began attending St. Isaac Jogues in Carney, where he was an associate pastor.

Well before Weidner knew him, her sister-in-law, Monica Beczkowski, taught the future bishop at Sacred Heart of Mary School in Graceland Park.

Like Bishop Rozanski, Weidner grew up in East Baltimore. Their shared history and his warm disposition make him feel like a family member, she said.

"He's a wonderful person," said Weidner, 75, adding that she has "always felt honored, blessed and privileged" to work for him.

Before Bishop Rozanski was ordained a bishop, Weidner assisted Bishop William C. Newman, who retired in 2003. Working for both bishops has made her "twice blessed," she said.

Assisting the bishop has put her in touch with the people he serves, and she relishes the relationships her work has wrought.

"He's greatly loved and respected," she said.

The faithful's affection for their bishop, however, means a significant demand for his time. From her in-the-trenches vantage, Weidner called Bishop Rozanski's schedule "absolutely chaotic."

"He's just on the go so much," she said. "Through it all, he keeps his cool."

She was caught off guard when Bishop Rozanski told her of his new appointment, but wasn't entirely surprised, she said.

"It's always a possibility," she said, although she had hoped an appointment elsewhere wouldn't happen.

Bishop Rozanski will be installed as the Diocese of Springfield's ninth bishop Aug. 12. She expects his flock there to find him to be a good listener and someone who will put them at ease.

Weidner thinks his new diocese "is perfect for him," she added.

"He will certainly be open to whatever needs to be done," she said.

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