

# **‘Diocesan institute’ to be formed for Episcopal nuns joining Catholic Church**

When 10 Episcopal nuns in Catonsville join the Roman Catholic Church in September, they hope to form the first “diocesan institute” in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

“A diocesan institute is an institute of religious men or women who take vows and live in community and they are overseen directly by the diocesan bishop,” said Dr. Diane Barr, chancellor for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. “They have a special relationship with the bishop.”

Diocesan institutes differ from religious communities of “pontifical rite,” like Dominicans and other large orders, whose governance model is under the authority of the Congregation for Religious in Rome, Dr. Barr said.

Dr. Barr said the archdiocese is working with the Holy See to help the sisters become a diocesan institute. Discussions are also being held with Vatican officials about whether the sisters will retain their name, “Society of All Saints’ Sisters of the Poor.”

The sisters will maintain ownership of their 88 acres of property in Catonsville after they enter the church, Dr. Barr said.

Archdiocesan leaders, including Anne Buening, Father Matthew T. Buening, Sister of Notre Dame de Namur Rosalie Murphy, Sister of St. Joseph Constance Gilder and Monsignor Robert J. Jaskot have worked closely with helping the sisters in their discernment. The nuns have undergone an education process similar to those enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

“This is a very sophisticated crowd,” Dr. Barr said. “They had done their homework before they got started, so they had good questions.”

[Click here to read the main story on the Episcopal sisters’ entrance into the Catholic](#)

Church.