

Father Parker named to new role

Father Adam J. Parker, pastor of Church of the Ascension, Halethorpe, has been named vice chancellor for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and will serve as secretary to Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien, effective Sept. 17.

"Cardinal (William H.) Keeler... shared with me some of the great experiences he had as his own bishop's secretary many years ago, such as accompanying his bishop to some of the sessions of Vatican II," said Father Parker, 35, who grew up in Severna Park. "He was very encouraging to me and assured me of his prayers and support during the transition."

A 1994 graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, Father Parker entered the pre-theology program at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Roland Park, in the fall of 1994, and after one year, went to Rome to continue his studies at The Pontifical North American College. He completed his pastoral year at St. Joseph, Cockeysville, before returning to Rome.

Ordained in 2000, Father Parker has served at Our Lady of Hope, Dundalk; St. Louis, Clarksville; St. Paul, Ellicott City; and St. Michael the Archangel, Overlea.

Father Parker served as associate pastor of St. Peter, Westernport, and St. Michael, Frostburg, from 2001 until he was assigned to Church of the Ascension in 2005.

The priest said it was difficult to announce his new assignment to the parishioners of Ascension.

"I have really enjoyed being there," he said. "I was overwhelmed by their expressions of kindness after the announcement."

Sister Mary Catherine Lewandowski, O.S.F., who serves as pastoral associate at Ascension, will assume responsibility of the day-to-day parish administration beginning Sept. 17, said Father Parker.

In his new position, Father Parker will be responsible for assisting the archbishop, who will be installed as head of the Premier See Oct. 1, in the administration of the archdiocese and lending support to the chancellor.

"As Archbishop O'Brien's secretary..., it will be very important to assist him in getting to know the priests of the archdiocese," said Father Parker.

Father Parker, who has interacted with Archbishop O'Brien on several levels over the years, said he spoke to the new archbishop recently.

"He expressed his gratitude to me for taking on this new role," he said. "He also

acknowledged the sense of loss for both me and Ascension parish as I step away from parish ministry.”