

Former Jesuit university president to head America magazine, website

NEW YORK - Jesuit Father John P. Schlegel, former president of Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., has been appointed publisher and president of America Press in New York, effective in November.

He succeeds Jesuit Father Drew Christiansen as president. Father Christiansen will remain editor in chief. The position of publisher had been open since the April retirement of Jan Attridge, who became America's first publisher when that position was established in July 2008.

The idea to join the roles of publisher and president is part of America Press's strategic planning process, which ends in late February, according to a Sept. 23 press release announcing Father Schlegel's appointment.

Father Schlegel was ordained a priest in 1973. He was Creighton's president from 2000 until his retirement from the position in July of this year. He also has held posts at other Jesuit universities, including as president of the University of San Francisco, 1991-2000. He has bachelor's and master's degrees from St. Louis University, a theology degree from the University of London and a doctorate in international relations from Oxford University.

"America is a vital national Jesuit apostolate bringing Catholic opinion to bear on the great public issues of the day," Father Schlegel said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to help secure and improve America's presence in today's new media environment."

Father Christiansen joined America in 2002 as a part-time associate editor. He

became editor in chief and president in 2005. In that time he has hired a staff of lay editors, overseen changes in the America Press's legal structure, instituted a mixed lay and Jesuit board of directors, expanded America's Web presence. In 2009 he led the centenary celebration of America magazine.

"Father Drew Christiansen has ably guided America through a new phase in its 100-plus year history, and we salute him for his continuing contributions to this wonderful ministry," said Albert C. Pierce, chairman of the America board. "I join everyone at America in welcoming Father John Schlegel, who has all the right experience and expertise to lead us into the next phase in America's history."