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### **New executive director named for the Association of US Catholic Priests**

A Holy Cross priest is the new executive director of the Association of U.S Catholic Priests. Father Stephen P. Newton, CSC, begins his new leadership role today (August 2), succeeding Father Bernard “Bob” Bonnot.

Newton’s selection was recommended by a search committee, approved by the AUSCP Leadership Team in July, and announced to association members in an email blast August 1.

Newton, a member of the leadership team since 2020 and the current treasurer of the AUSCP, serves on the campus ministry team of St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Ind. In addition to extensive pastoral and education experience, he has served as executive director of the Life Treatment Centers in South Bend, founding director of the South Bend Center for the Homeless, and founding president of De Paul Treatment Centers in Portland, Oregon, and programs in East Africa. He has also directed numerous retreats for religious and priests.

Father Michael Bausch, who led the search team, said Newton was among several candidates considered. He “interviewed very well, is obviously talented and organized and he comes with a working knowledge of the AUSCP.” Bausch said Newton would continue temporarily as treasurer until his replacement is selected.

Bonnot has been a guiding force for the AUSCP since joining the leadership team in 2013 and serving as leadership chair, then as the first executive director from January 2019 until present.

“Bob has kept the AUSCP on a steady course of development and growth as he moved around the country in his RV home on wheels,” said Franciscan Sister Jackie Doepker, AUSCP executive secretary and a member of the search team. “Bob devoted untold hours of his time visiting and encouraging members to use their talents on behalf of spreading the spirit and values of Vatican II.”

“Bob lives a contemplative spirituality in the midst of many activities,” said Father Greg Barras, current chair of the leadership team. “He has promised to remain active, especially with the AUSCP webinars. We are most grateful to Bob for the numerous hours he devoted to building a strong foundation for AUSCP.

“It will be very difficult to match Bob in energy and knowledge, but I intend to do so in commitment;” Newton said. “In addition to continuing much of what Bob began, I hope to help market the association as one open to all priests and invite all non-ordained persons to help us renew the priesthood for the post-Covid Church. Through state-of-the-art use of social media,

we will be expanding opportunities for the continuing formation and education of priests. Increased membership is essential to accomplish all we need to accomplish. While the association is for the support and issues of the Catholic priesthood, we are also looking for significant ways to continue to associate with laity in more than mere advisory roles."

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