



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PAULIST FATHERS ANNOUNCE RETURN OF MINISTRY AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

**NEW YORK** – The Paulist Fathers, a missionary society of Catholic priests, have advised the Most Rev. David Walkowiak, bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, MI, that they will return pastoral care of St. Luke University Parish in Allendale, MI, to the diocese on June 30, 2017. The parish is the home of the Catholic campus ministry at Grand Valley State University.

“Throughout our nearly 160-year history, Paulist missionaries have contributed to the founding of Catholic parishes and campus ministries throughout the United States and Canada. We feel particularly blessed to have helped to establish St. Luke University Parish. We have loved being part of this warm Catholic faith community made up of Grand Valley State University students, faculty and staff members, and residents of the local community,” said Paulist Fr. Eric Andrews, president of the Paulist Fathers.

“We take pride in the recent completion of the parish’s beautiful new church building. It will be a fine home for the parish,” said Fr. Andrews. “Completing our ministry at St. Luke at this key moment in its history is bittersweet. While we are sad to take our leave, we know this community of faith will continue to grow and thrive.”

In a statement, Bishop Walkowiak said, “The Paulist Fathers graciously responded to the invitation of my predecessor, Bishop Hurley, to staff the newly-established parish in 2007. I am grateful for the pastoral ministry they have provided to the university students and families over these 10 years. I wish to express my thanks to Fr. Brad Schoeberle, C.S.P., and Fr. Chuck Cuniff, C.S.P., for their pastoral ministry and efforts to assist the parish in its move to a newly-constructed church.”

The bishop noted that the Paulist Fathers will continue to minister in the Diocese of Grand Rapids at both the Catholic Information Center and at the Cathedral of St. Andrew. The Catholic Information Center is now in its 70<sup>th</sup> year, having been founded by the Paulist Fathers in downtown Grand Rapids in 1947. “The Paulists have ministered in our diocese for 70 years and have provided key leadership in the promotion of evangelization, ecumenism, and reconciliation. I am most grateful for their continued commitment to our diocese,” he said.

Fr. Schoeberle, pastor, and Fr. Cuniff, associate pastor, will serve at St. Luke through the end of June. In the coming weeks, the bishop will announce the appointment of a priest of the diocese to serve as the next pastor.

“This has been a collaboration of the Diocese of Grand Rapids and the Paulist Fathers in which student and parish ministry combine the stability of parish life with the energy and vigor of young adult ministry,” said Fr. Schoeberle. “Our people have risen to the challenge of establishing this special place, and are ready to take on this new challenge. I will miss them terribly but have confidence in their ability to continue to grow the parish.”

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