

# NEWS RELEASE



COMMUNICATIONS CONTACT:

ARCHDIOCESE of OMAHA

Rev. Joseph C. Taphorn, Chancellor  
402.558.3100 ext. 226  
402.551.4212 (FAX)  
jctaphorn@archomaha.org

100 N. 62nd St. • Omaha, NE 68132  
www.archomaha.org

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## **Archbishop Lucas reappoints curial officials** Key consultative body reestablished

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009 (OMAHA, NE) – Archbishop George J. Lucas exercised the executive duties that goes with being the newly-installed leader of the Archdiocese of Omaha by reappointing the curial officials who served under Archbishop Elden F. Curtiss and by reestablishing a key consultative body.

Lucas reappointed the Rev. Michael W. Grewe vicar general and Rev. Patrick C. Harrison judicial vicar. Those continuing in their positions uninterrupted are Rev. Gregory P. Baxter as moderator of the curia, Rev. Joseph C. Taphorn as chancellor, and Deacon Timothy F. McNeil as vice-chancellor. All held the same offices under Archbishop Curtiss.

Grewe lost his vicar general office when the resignation of Archbishop Curtiss was accepted by Pope Benedict XVI. As Curtiss' replacement, Lucas was required by canon law to appoint a new vicar general or reappoint Grewe.

Canon law also requires a diocesan bishop to appoint a judicial vicar for a definite time. Harrison's term was due to expire, but Lucas reappointed him to a three-year term that expires June 30, 2012. As judicial vicar, he manages the affairs of the archdiocese's Metropolitan Tribunal. Grewe, Baxter, Taphorn, and McNeil's appointment do not expire with time.

The reappointments do not affect the parish assignments of Grewe, Harrison, Baxter, and Taphorn. Grewe serves as pastor of St. Patrick Parish in suburban Gretna; Harrison is a resident at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Omaha; Baxter is pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Omaha; and Taphorn is a resident at St. Margaret Mary.

Lucas also met a canon law requirement by establishing anew the Priests' Council of the Archdiocese of Omaha. By the same act, he ratified the council's elected and appointed members with unexpired terms. Vacancies due to the expiration of terms will be filled by an election process among priest voters. The Priests' Council is a consultative body made up of priests serving in the archdiocese. It will assist Lucas in the governance of the archdiocese according to the norm of law.

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Founded as a diocese in 1885, the Archdiocese of Omaha serves spiritual and human needs in a 23-county area of Northeast Nebraska. Through its 148 parishes and missions, the archdiocese reaches out to more than 221,000 Nebraska Catholics. With two Catholic universities, 58 elementary schools, 18 high schools and a parish-based religious education program within its boundaries, Catholic education enriches the lives of some 44,000 young people. The Archdiocese of Omaha is one of the largest private social service providers in the region. Catholic Charities and the Office of Family Life lead a network that ministers to the broadest and most fundamental needs of our community. Generous support to the Annual Appeal is symbolic of the collective faith that allows the Archdiocese of Omaha to continue the mission of Jesus Christ. [www.archomaha.org](http://www.archomaha.org)