



MEDIA RELEASE

May 5, 2021

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BISHOP NAMES NEW VICAR GENERAL FOR DIOCESE

Fr. Roch Martin takes on new position for Catholic Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie

SUDBURY, ON - Bishop Thomas Dowd of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie announced today that he has appointed a new Vicar General for the Diocese. Fr. Roch Martin, currently Pastor of St. Jean-de-Brebeuf Church in Sudbury, takes on the new position effective August 1, 2021.

A vicar general is a priest who assists the Bishop in the governance of a diocese, and has authority to act on behalf of the Bishop. On his appointment, the vicar general becomes the highest-ranking official of a diocese after the Bishop.

Fr. Roch Martin, ordained a Catholic priest in 1995, has served many churches around the Greater Sudbury area. “I was surprised that the Bishop thought of me for this particular appointment, I did not expect this at all,” said Fr. Martin from his parish in Sudbury, “I gladly accepted with the condition that the Bishop will guide and support me so I can learn this role and serve the people of the Diocese in the best way.”

As the current pandemic has brought new challenges of gathering together to worship, Fr. Martin hopes to tackle these challenges among others in his new role. “We have been reaching out to people in so many different ways over the past year, obviously as our situation continues to change, we have to think about what it will be like when the pandemic is over,” said Fr. Martin, “how do we invite people back to their parish communities, and continue to reach out in many different ways to them?”

“Fr. Martin is highly respected by both the clergy and parishioners of our Diocese, and will undoubtedly serve us well in this new position,” said Bishop Thomas Dowd, Bishop

of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, “I am very much looking forward to working together with him.”

The position of Vicar General has been vacant since May 2020, when the former Bishop of the Diocese, Marcel Damphousse was appointed Archbishop of Ottawa-Cornwall.

On what Fr. Martin will miss about working within a church community, he said “I will miss my people, you get attached to the people you serve, they become your family.”

Following custom, Fr. Martin may now be referred to as “Monsignor” for as long as he holds the vicar general position.

A new pastor for St. Jean-de-Brebeuf Church in Sudbury will be announced at a later date.

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Additional Information for Media:

What is a Vicar General?

A Vicar General is the principal deputy of a Catholic Bishop. Always a priest, the Vicar General is appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese to assist him in the governance of the Diocese. He has the authority to act on behalf of the Bishop when required of him, and in case of sudden illness, death or transfer of Bishop, the Vicar General may be appointed as the main administrator of the Diocese.

Who is Fr. Roch Martin?

Rev. Father Roch Martin was born in Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, in 1964. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Sudbury and St-Paul University, Ottawa. In 1989, he completed a Baccalaureate in Education at Laurentian University, Sudbury. After obtaining his Teacher’s Certificate, he became a teacher in a Catholic school in southwestern Ontario. He then completed his studies in 1995 at St-Paul University Seminary in Ottawa with a Masters in Pastoral Sciences at St-Paul University, Ottawa. He was ordained to the priesthood on November 10, 1995. He has since served in many parishes in Greater Sudbury.

When does this appointment take effect?

Fr. Roch Martin takes on the appointment of Vicar General on August 1, 2021. Until that time, he will remain as Pastor of St. Jean-de-Brebeuf Church in Sudbury.

Who will take over as Pastor of St. Jean-de-Brebeuf Church in Sudbury?

At this time, a replacement for Fr. Martin has not been announced. A new Pastor of St. Jean-de-Brebeuf will be announced in the near future.

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Supplied Photo: Fr. Roch Martin is appointed the new Vicar General for the Catholic Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.

