

New Institute For Catholic Formation And New Norbertine Community Coming To Springfield

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SPRINGFIELD - The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois announced March 1, plans to establish The Evermode Institute, a new center for Catholic spiritual and intellectual formation in Springfield, and that the institute will include priests from the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey, who will establish a new community there.

In what will be located at the site of the former Chiara Center on the grounds of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis in Springfield, The Evermode Institute will focus on formation for Catholics, offering programming for both ordained and lay teachers of the faith such as catechists, Parish School of Religion teachers (PSR), Catholic school

teachers, and other groups who teach the faith. Several priests from the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey, based in Orange, Calif., will move to the property with the necessary preliminary steps being taken this summer. Serving at The Evermode Institute will be their primary apostolate. A date for when The Evermode Institute will open has not been finalized.

“We have developed a strong relationship with the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey over the past several years, and we are thrilled to welcome them to our diocese,” said Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. “The Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey are a vibrant and growing community of holy men, and their presence and apostolic work will be a great blessing to the people of our diocese and to this region.”



The Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey recently completed construction of a new abbey in Orange County, Calif., and the monastery is already at full capacity, with nearly 50 priests and 40 seminarians.

“In light of the growth in our community, we had already been discerning the possibility of establishing a new community when Bishop Paprocki approached us,” said Abbot

Eugene Hayes, O. Praem. “After prayerful discernment as a community, we have joyfully accepted Bishop Paprocki’s invitation, and we are grateful for the opportunity to establish a presence in the Springfield diocese.”

The Evermode Institute is being established under the patronage of St. Evermode, a Norbertine prelate who died in 1178 and was a close collaborator of St. Norbert. St. Evermode is credited with great and effective works of evangelization and formation in the Catholic faith.

These announcements follow news earlier last year when the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois and the Hospital Sisters reached an agreement for the diocese to establish a trust that has now assumed ownership of the sisters’ buildings and grounds effective Jan. 1, 2022. The Hospital Sisters will continue to live in the convent indefinitely as part of that agreement.

“We welcome the Norbertine Fathers to Springfield and to the holy ground that has been our home since 1917,” said Sister Maureen O’Connor, OSF, Provincial Superior of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis. “This new chapter in the history of the Hospital Sisters and the diocese marks the beginning of what we pray will be a mutually beneficial relationship. Throughout our nearly 150 years in America, the Hospital Sisters have collaborated with others in the work of the Church, and so we view this agreement between the diocese and the Norbertine Fathers as a continuation of that tradition.”

About the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael’s Abbey

Immersed in the 900-year tradition of our order, the Norbertine Fathers live a common life of liturgical prayer and care for souls. Their life at St. Michael’s Abbey is organized according to prayer of the Church: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. “Seven times a day I praise You,” says the Psalmist, and by chanting together the prayers of the Divine Office, Norbertine canons “continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.”

For more than 60 years, the Norbertine Fathers have served the Christian faithful in Southern California, “lifting high the Holy Eucharist over the miseries and errors of this world” (St. Pope John Paul II). The community’s apostolic ministries are many and various, but they all find their source in a common life of prayer and fraternal charity. To learn more, visit stmichaelsabbey.com.

About the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Under the leadership of Bishop Thomas John Paprocki, the mission of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield in Illinois is to build a fervent community of intentional and dedicated missionary disciples of the Risen Lord and steadfast stewards of God's creation who seek to become saints. Accordingly, the community of Catholic faithful in this diocese is committed to the discipleship and stewardship way of life as commanded by Christ Our Savior and as revealed by Sacred Scripture and Tradition. The diocese is comprised of 124,000 Catholics in 129 parishes and 43 Catholic schools across 28 counties.

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