



# *The Archdiocese of San Antonio*

**Date: August 9, 2005**

**Statement: Announcement of departure of Msgr. Lawrence J. Stuebben and naming of the new Moderator of the Curia**

**Archbishop José H. Gomez**

In the nearly six months since my installation as Archbishop, I have known that this day would arrive, and thanks to his willingness to serve the best interests of the archdiocese, we have been able to delay this day for many months. However, today, I have called you together to make the announcement that Msgr. Larry Stuebben will officially retire from his positions as Moderator of the Curia and the head of the Department of Administration, effective September 1, 2005.

I know that you join me in thanking Msgr. Stuebben for the love and service he has given the Archdiocese of San Antonio. I learned quickly how and why Archbishop Flores depended on him in so many different ways. His great administrative gifts and love for the Church of San Antonio and its history prepared him to meet the many challenges of his office effectively.

However, I am pleased to announce that Msgr. Stuebben has agreed to remain as Vicar General of the Archdiocese until April 4, 2007. That is, not coincidentally, also his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.

I am also announcing Msgr. Stuebben's newest assignment. Effective October 5, 2005, he will join Father Norman Ermis, as Parochial Vicar at St. Margaret Mary Parish. I know that he will be a great blessing to the people of the parish.

With the closing of this chapter in the history of the archdiocese, I am pleased this morning that we are all a part of a new beginning. Today, I am announcing the appointment of our new Moderator of the Curia and head of the Department of Administration. In looking for someone to perform these important responsibilities, I prayed daily for guidance from the Holy Spirit, and sought the counsel of my auxiliary bishops, my senior staff, of course Msgr. Stuebben, and many others in the Archdiocese who understand the complexities of both positions.

So this morning is one filled with excitement and enthusiasm as I announce the new Moderator of the Curia and head of the Department of Administration, Father Martin Leopold. Father Leopold brings many gifts and talents to this position. He is well known and highly respected by his fellow priests and others who serve the Church. He has served the communities of Gonzalez and Waelder as Pastor of St. James, Sacred Heart, and St. Patrick Churches. Father Leopold has shown the

willingness and ability to work collaboratively with diverse groups. He has also exhibited strong leadership and organizational skills.

Father Leopold has my confidence and support in his new position. I look forward to working with him closely in continuing the work that must be done throughout the Archdiocese. Msgr. Stuebben has agreed to remain with us through the month of September to insure a smooth transition.

We will be announcing Father Leopold's replacement in Gonzalez and Waelder soon.

I have two other important announcements to make this morning.

For the past 11 years the Archdiocese has been blessed through the dedication and talent of the Director of the Office of Stewardship and Development, Chris Grasso. He has done much to define and improve the Archbishop's Annual Appeal and has raised literally millions of dollars through grants from foundations to help parishes and ministries throughout the archdiocese. Recently Mr. Grasso submitted his resignation and announced his intention to accept the position of Vice President for Advancement at St. Patrick's Seminary in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. He will be working with our good friend and former Rector of Assumption Seminary, Father Gerald Brown. Chris will remain with us through the upcoming Archbishop's Annual Appeal. I

thank Chris for sharing his kindness and considerable talents with the Archdiocese and wish him God's blessings in his new position.

Finally, since I have come to San Antonio, I have made no secret as to the priority I place on effective communication as a tool of evangelization and catechesis. In order to help us further develop our already effective archdiocesan media resources, I am appointing Deacon Pat Rodgers as the fulltime Director of Communications for the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Deacon Rodgers will work in a collaborative and consultative spirit with *Today's Catholic*, CTSA, and our new Internet effort. He will also continue to work with the secular media, and act as archdiocesan spokesman.

I ask your prayers for Msgr. Stuebben, Father Martin Leopold, Chris Grasso, and Deacon Pat Rodgers as they respond to the call to serve the Church in their new positions. Finally, I thank each one of them for all that they have done in their many years of unselfish and inspired service.