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SMC President Richard Plumb steps down; interim president named

By Vera Kochan



Brother Thomas Jones, FSC, is serving as Saint Mary's College Interim President Photo Saint Mary's College

faculty, staff, and our extended community."

Saint Mary's College parted ways with its president of two years, Dr. Richard Plumb, according to a March 30 press release announcing his departure.

According to the press release, "The Saint Mary's College of California Board of Trustees Chairman and Trustees in consultation with its Brother Visitor, Provincial of the District of San Francisco New Orleans, have been in discussion with Saint Mary's College President Richard Plumb and determined that the College would be best served by a change in presidential leadership to propel it forward into its next chapter of growth and innovation." Plumb's last day with SMC was June 30.

Plumb, who served as the college's 30th president, also issued a March 30 press release through SMC. "After careful consideration and discussion with my family and the Board of Trustees, I am stepping down as President of Saint Mary's College," he stated. "I will continue in my current role through the end of the current academic year and continue to support the highly talented and strong senior leadership team as we ensure the College's operations continue smoothly and support our students,

Both press releases listed many of Plumb's accomplishments during his short term, which included guiding the College through the COVID-19 pandemic and positioning it for success in the post-pandemic environment, as well as establishing a new senior leadership team and facilitating the completion of the College's five-year strategic plan. Plumb also worked with Facilities Services and the board of trustees to facilitate the update of several residence halls, prioritize critical safety repairs, and take steps towards modernizing the college's buildings and grounds.

Brother Visitor Nick Gonzalez, FSC, and Eric Flowers, Chair of the Board of Trustees, in a statement on May 22 named Brother Thomas Jones, FSC, as interim president effective July 1, while the board begins the search for Plumb's replacement. Jones is an SMC alumnus and is currently the college's Staff Psychologist in Counseling and Psychological Services, having been a resident director since 2012.

"I am both honored and humbled to serve Saint Mary's as its Interim President," stated Jones. "Throughout my life I have been committed to Lasallian principles of education, principles that are embodied in the College's mission and have inspired and grounded the transformational experiences of students since 1968."

Jones added, "I enthusiastically embrace this opportunity to work with the Board of Trustees, senior leadership, faculty, staff, alumni, our amazing student body, and other supporters as we position ourselves as a leading innovative, national Catholic university that inspires minds, touches hearts, and transforms lives."

A nationwide search will commence at the start of the 2023-24 academic year with the help of an executive search firm. An SMC Search Committee made up of Trustees, Christian Brothers, faculty, staff, and student advisors will all take part in the selection process.?

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