



The Diocese of Knoxville

Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee

MEDIA ADVISORY
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Diocese announces new schools superintendent

KNOXVILLE--- Bishop Richard F. Stika has announced that Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed. S., a veteran educator with nearly three decades of experience as a teacher, principal, and most recently as superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, W. Va., has accepted the position of superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville.

Mrs. Deschaine will begin her new job in late July.

"I look forward to building upon the strong history and tremendous success of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville," Mrs. Deschaine said. "My decision was well thought out and prayerfully considered, and I am grateful for the opportunity to lead schools that are strong in faith and have displayed a commitment to their Catholic mission and identity."

Prior to her time as superintendent of schools in Wheeling-Charleston, Mrs. Deschaine was superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Saginaw, Mich., from 2011-2018.

She served as a teacher and principal at various schools in Michigan from 1998 until her appointment as superintendent in Saginaw.

Mrs. Deschaine earned an undergraduate degree from Central Michigan University in 1985, a master's degree in education from Michigan State University in 2004, and an advanced degree as an education specialist from Saginaw Valley State University in 2010.

"I have spoken with the current principals and school presidents in the Diocese of Knoxville, and I've had a chance to visit East Tennessee. My husband and I are looking forward to making the Diocese of Knoxville our home," Mrs. Deschaine said.

She succeeds Dr. Sedonna Prater, who has led Catholic schools in the diocese since 2019 and was instrumental in obtaining and maintaining diocesan-level accreditation for its schools. Dr. Prater will continue her career as vice president of academics at Knoxville Catholic High School.

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"Catholic schools have been a big part of the history of East Tennessee for more than 100 years," Bishop Stika said. "I want to thank Sedonna for her many years of service and leadership in the diocese, and I welcome Mrs.

Deschaine as our newest superintendent. This is an exciting time for our schools.”

The Diocese of Knoxville offers excellence in education with 10 accredited, Catholic, private schools located in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Kingsport, Johnson City, and Oak Ridge. The diocese is committed to providing supportive learning environments for children rooted in the love of Christ. The parochial school system provides Pre-K, K-8, and high school education.

Diocesan schools meet the standards established by the National Standards and Benchmarks of Excellence for Effective Catholic Schools issued by the National Catholic Educational Association and Cognia, an international accrediting agency.

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