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Denver Catholic Charities CEO to succeed Carr in USCCB department

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WASHINGTON -- Jonathan Reyes, president and CEO of Catholic Charities and Community Services of the Archdiocese of Denver since 2009, has been appointed to succeed John Carr as executive director of the U.S. bishops' Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development.

Reyes is expected to begin his new job in December.

Carr retired in August after working almost 25 years for the bishops on a wide variety of domestic and international policy issues and took a fellowship at Harvard University's Institute of Politics.

Msgr. Ronny Jenkins, general secretary of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, announced the appointment Monday.

In a statement, he praised Reyes for his "vital experience with on-the-ground charities work and with young adults." He called him "a proven administrator" who "has the ability to inspire people to embrace the church's social teaching and carry it out in their daily lives."

Reyes has served as director of social ministry for the Denver Archdiocese simultaneously with his Catholic Charities position.

He also founded Christ in the City, a national volunteer and formation program for college students. In its third year, it has had more than 200 participants. In a 2010 interview, Reyes said, "I totally expect it to be a nationwide phenomenon and movement. ... It's clearly filling a need in the young who love Christ and want to serve."

He also oversaw the creation of Regina Caeli Catholic Counseling Services and Lighthouse Women's Care Center and completed the Guadalupe Community Assistance Center in Greeley, Colo.

In 2005, Reyes co-founded and was first president of the Augustine Institute -- a Catholic graduate school that combines education in theology, Scripture and history with practical formation in pedagogy and leadership.

Reyes described the institute as a response to situations where there is a lack of a well-defined Catholic identity and to a crisis of orthodoxy in terms of less-than-full fidelity to the magisterium. He added there was a crisis in catechesis in which many Catholics lack a full understanding of their faith and the role it must play in their lives.

Reyes was vice president for campus ministry and leadership formation of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students in Denver, a team-based evangelization program aimed toward students on college campuses.

At a 2004 FOCUS meeting in Denver, Reyes told the students, "Who will you serve? Christ or his enemy? If you give all to your Master, you will reign with him."

Before arriving in Denver, Reyes served on the staff of Christendom College in Front Royal, Va., 1998-2004, first as an assistant professor of history, then as vice president of academic affairs. He has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Michigan and a doctorate in European history from the University of Notre Dame.

He is married and has seven children.

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