

Order of priests to run Glen Cove school

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The Diocese of [Rockville Centre](#) has agreed to let a tiny Austrian-based order of priests run a Catholic grammar school in Glen Cove in hopes of reversing a decline in enrollment.

The Rev. Elias Carr of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine will become headmaster of All Saints Regional School after the current principal, James Thompson, retires in June. Carr, a [Syosset](#) native who also is pastor of St. Rocco parish in Glen Cove, will hire an academic dean to help handle the school's daily administration.

[The move](#) comes as the diocese prepares to shutter six other Catholic grammar schools in June because of dropping enrollment, under its strategic plan to strengthen the remaining schools.

Carr and other priests said they hope the new approach will attract more students, enhance academics and strengthen Catholic identity at the nursery-through-eighth-grade school. Enrollment has dropped from about 400 to 230 in the last five years or so, said the Rev. Robert Romeo, pastor of St. Boniface Martyr Church in [Sea Cliff](#), one of five parishes that send students to All Saints.

"I am so excited about what this will do to our school," Romeo said. "It's going to enhance the sense of family and community that are hallmarks of Catholic education."

Carr said he wants "to create a school that prepares our young people to be able to go to the best high schools and college." He added that he hopes to add Latin and German to the curriculum.

Local parish leaders pushed for [the move](#) and won the diocese's agreement, Carr said. While some diocesan grammar schools have religious sisters as principals, the headmaster-academic dean model is new to the diocese.

"Parishes are looking to do whatever they can within the strategic plan to strengthen their school," diocese spokesman Sean Dolan said. "This is consistent with the strategic plan. It's a very exciting partnership."

While Carr and his order will run All Saints, ownership will remain in the hands of the diocese, Dolan said. That is different from the diocese's decisions in 2004 to completely hand over St. Martin de Porres grammar school in [Uniondale](#) to the Marianist Brothers, and in 1986 when it gave them Kellenberg Memorial High School in [Uniondale](#).

Carr, 44, a graduate of [Binghamton University](#) who has several graduate degrees in theology from institutions in Rome and elsewhere, arrived in Glen Cove last June after the diocese asked his order to take over St. Rocco and St. Patrick parishes.

Three men from his order are working in the parishes, with a fourth expected in July. "They have enough priests to be involved in the school. It's near where they are. It all makes sense," Dolan said.

The order has 47 members worldwide, most in Austria.

Some parents of those in the six schools slated to close had asked the diocese earlier this year to allow the Marianists -- who also run [Chaminade High School](#) in [Mineola](#) -- to take over their schools, but the diocese rejected the idea. Dolan said yesterday the schools will still close and that their situation is different.

"This is not analogous to that situation," Dolan said. "This school was not on the list to close."

Joseph Malerba, a parent leader at St. Ignatius Loyola School in [Hicksville](#), one of those set to shut down, said he was "shocked" the diocese would allow Carr's order into the Glen Cove school but won't consider similar options to save the other schools.

THE CANONS REGULAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Founded: In 1114 with an abbey in Austria near Vienna.

The order: Members take vows of obedience, chastity and sharing of property and usually live in a communal residence.

Membership: Currently 47 worldwide, most in Austria. Three are in Glen Cove, with a fourth to arrive in July. The order has always been small, with a dozen or so members during much of its history, with a peak of about 100 about a century ago.