

Lansing priest appointed to Jerusalem papal center

The Rev. William Wesley Thomas, 46, a Lansing native and priest for the Catholic Diocese of Lansing, has been named vice charge of the Holy See at the Notre Dame Jerusalem Center in Jerusalem.

In his new position, Thomas will serve as an administrator at the papal center, which is the center for the Roman Catholic Church in Jerusalem. It includes a pilgrim's hospital, a school for Arab youths, a cultural center and a museum.

AT THE HOLY See's request, he was granted a leave of absence from Bishop Kenneth J. Povish of the Catholic Diocese of Lansing for the five-year appointment.

Thomas, son of Willa Neitz of Lansing, and the late Wesley E. Thomas, left Lansing Tuesday for Germany where he will visit for a few days prior to assuming his new post on Oct. 1.

A graduate of Eastern High School, Thomas received a bachelor's degree from Bob Jones University, Greenville, S.C., and later spent two additional years at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

AFTER TEACHING in Eaton Rapids High School from 1961 to 1965, and at Central Christian High School in Grand Rapids from 1965-66, he visited Germany and became a resident of Berlin in 1967.

Thomas began his Catholic theo-



Rev. William Thomas

logical studies at the University of Wuerzburg in 1973. Following his ordination to the diaconate in 1977, he returned to the Diocese of Lansing and served one year as a deacon at St. Patrick's Parish in Brighton.

A member of the Schoenstatt Institute of Diocesan Priests, Thomas was ordained a priest for the Lansing Diocese in 1978 in Schoenstatt, West Germany, by the Most Rev. James S. Sullivan, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Lansing.

From 1978 to 1981 he served parishes in Flint and Owosso, prior to beginning studies for a doctorate at the University of Wuerzburg in Germany in 1981.