



**EMBARGO: July 27, 2020 10am EDT**

**Courage International Welcomes New Associate Director**

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(Trumbull, Conn.) Courage International is proud to announce the appointment of its new associate director, Father Colin Blatchford, who joins the apostolate in its 40th anniversary year.

"I'm honored and humbled to have been asked to serve the Courage apostolate as the new associate director," said Father Blatchford.

Prior to receiving the appointment, Father Blatchford, 36, had been the chaplain for Courage and EnCourage in his home Diocese of Knoxville, a position which he held for two and a half years.

"It is with zeal and a healthy fear of the Lord that I look forward to taking on this new role. I look forward to serving the Apostolate and growing in my knowledge, understanding, and compassion for those whom it serves," he said.

Father Blatchford will relocate to Connecticut in early September, where the Courage International headquarters is based.

"It is a blessing and a privilege to welcome Father Blatchford to the Courage Office" said Father Philip Bochanski, Courage International's executive director. Father Bochanski himself joined the apostolate as associate director in 2015, having served as local Courage chaplain in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for five years. After serving alongside Father Paul Check, executive director from 2008 to 2016, Father Bochanski succeeded him at the beginning of 2017.

Even though Father Blatchford will be taking up residence in the Diocese of Bridgeport, where the Courage offices are located, he remains incardinated in the Knoxville Diocese.

"Father Blatchford has a wonderful devotion to sharing our Catholic faith and he does so with a very compassionate heart," said Bishop Richard Stika of the Diocese of Knoxville.

"He possesses an ability to connect with people of all ages, but especially young people, with understanding and empathy," the Bishop said. "Clearly, Father has a place in his heart for the mission and ministry of Courage International."

"In a way, we view Father Blatchford as a gift that the Diocese of Knoxville received when I ordained him 6 years ago, and he is a gift that we are pleased to share with Courage International," Bishop Stika said.

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Father Bochanski added: "We are exceedingly grateful to Bishop Stika for his support for our apostolate, and his generosity in sharing with us such a fine priest."

Ordained a priest of the Diocese of Knoxville in 2014, Father Blatchford received his B.A. in philosophy from Ave Maria University in 2006, and completed his seminary training at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

Father Blatchford's term as associate director officially begins September 8, 2020.



**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

*Background on Courage International and EnCourage*

**Courage International, Inc.** is an apostolate of the Catholic Church which offers support to persons experiencing SSA who have chosen to live a chaste life. It was founded by Fr. John Harvey, OSFS at the request of the late Cardinal Terence Cooke. The first Courage chapter meeting was held in New York City in 1980, and it was this initial group which developed the Five Goals of Courage: Chastity, Prayer and Dedication, Fellowship, Support, and Good Example. Fr. Harvey was succeeded as executive director by Fr. Paul Check, who held the position from 2008 to the end of 2016. Fr. Check was then succeeded by Fr. Philip Bochanski in January, 2017. Today, Courage has more than 150 chapters in eighteen countries. Courage and EnCourage received canonical status in the Roman Catholic Church as a diocesan clerical public association of the faithful on November 28, 2016.

**EnCourage** is an apostolate under the Courage umbrella which provides support for families and friends of persons who identify as LGBT, and aims to teach them how to reach out to their loved ones with compassion and understanding. The group was first formed in 1987 by families in search of guidance for supporting their loved ones who experience SSA. In 1992, this group adopted the name EnCourage. Currently, they have more than seventy-five chapters in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, Italy, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.

For additional information, please visit our website at [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org)

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