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St. Mary's College gets its first lay president

Monica Clark | Mar. 27, 2013

James A. Donahue, current president and professor of ethics at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif., has been named the 29th president of Saint Mary's College of California. The first lay president of the Christian Brothers' 150-year-old institution, Donahue will begin his term July 1, replacing Christian Br. Ronald Gallagher, who has served as president for the last eight years.

Donahue, a graduate of College of the Holy Cross, Princeton Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union, is "steeped in the intellectual tradition of the liberal arts and the Catholic intellectual tradition," said Russ Harrison, chair of the college's board of trustees, and Christian Br. Donald Johanson, provincial of the San Francisco Province, in making the announcement Tuesday. He is, they said, "our unambiguous choice."

The liberal arts college is located on 420 acres in Moraga, a suburban community about 12 miles east of Berkeley. It enrolls almost 3,000 undergraduate students and 1,300 adult and graduate students.

Prior to his presidency at GTU, Donahue served for 15 years at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., as a professor of theology and ethics, dean of students, and vice president for student affairs. He shared responsibility with the university president for NCAA Division I athletics. He has also held faculty and administrative positions at Boston College and Santa Clara University.

Donahue has been an ethics consultant to various organizations, including the Levi Strauss Corporation, the Department of Defense, and the Catholic Health Association. He is co-author of *Ethics Across the Curriculum: A Practice-Based Approach* and co-editor of *Religion, Ethics and the Common Good.* He is completing the manuscript for his third book, *Organizational Character: Studies in the Ethics of Institutions.*

Donahue and his wife have two sons.

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