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Pope appoints British canon law expert to economic oversight council

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Mar. 24, 2014
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Pope Francis named Msgr. Brian Ferme, a former dean of the School of Canon Law at The Catholic University of America in Washington, to be the new prelate secretary of the Vatican Council for the Economy.

In his new position, the British priest will assist German Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising, head of the council Pope Francis established Feb. 24 to set policies for the administrative and financial activities of all Vatican offices and bodies.

The Vatican announced the monsignor's appointment Saturday.

Born in 1955, he is a priest of the diocese of Portsmouth, England. Ferme served as dean of the canon law faculty at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome before being appointed dean at CUA in Washington.

An expert in the fields of medieval history and canon law, the monsignor holds bachelor's degrees from Monash University and Catholic Theological College, both in Melbourne, Australia; licentiate and doctoral degrees in canon law from the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome; and a doctorate in medieval history from Oxford University in England.

He served on the theological faculty at Oxford, 1989-93; the canon law faculty at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, 1993-98; and the canon law faculty at the Lateran University, 1998-2003.

Since 2008, he has been head of the faculty at the St. Pius X School of Canon Law in Venice, Italy.

He is a consultor for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts and has worked with the Apostolic Signature, the church's highest appeals court.

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