



Veteran Football Coach to Leave Saint Viator

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Head football coach Chris Kirkpatrick (right) congratulates junior Conor Kinasz after a great play at the homecoming football game.

Last Saturday's football game was bitter-sweet for longtime head coach Chris Kirkpatrick. It marked the last time he would take the field at the helm of the Saint Viator High School football team.

After 10 years as the head coach and eight years as dean of students, Kirkpatrick will be leaving the school to pursue other opportunities.

"Saint Viator will always hold a special place in my heart," Kirkpatrick said. "This is where I got my start as head football coach. I will forever be grateful to this school and the Viatorians for all they have given to me over the past decade."

Kirkpatrick sites an opportunity to grow both personally and professionally as his reason

for leaving.

He will be taking over as the athletic director at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School in Kankakee, Ill. While he will be starting a new role, he will still be holding onto something familiar --- a spot on the Fighting Irish's bench next football season as an assistant coach.

Throughout Kirkpatrick's tenure at Saint Viator, his teams have enjoyed various successes. In 2005, he was named East Suburban Catholic Conference Coach of the Year for football, and in 2006, his team was ESCC co-champions. Four of his teams, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2009, advanced to the state playoffs, with the 2005 and 2006 teams tying the school record for the most wins in a season with nine.

"In the last 10 years, we've set goals and attained many of them," Kirkpatrick continued. "One goal I am proud to say we reached was to make these athletes better people. I leave here knowing my players over the last ten years are exceptional young men."

"We are grateful for his 10 years of service as both dean of students and head football coach," said the Rev. Robert M. Egan, C.S.V., Saint Viator High School president. "He brought commitment and dedication to our mission and this team. I congratulate him and wish him well as he begins a new chapter in his life."

Athletic Director Tim Carlson followed up with, "Chris worked hard to make sure both he and his team were prepared on a weekly basis. He put in a great deal of time and effort to put our teams in a position to compete and be successful. I am sure his strong work ethic will serve him well in his new position."

Kirkpatrick will stay on through the school year and begin his new role next fall.

"While leaving the school and my team behind will be hard," Kirkpatrick added, "I am looking forward to this new opportunity."

A search for a new head football coach will begin in November. More information can be found on the school Web site, saintviator.com.