

STRICTLY EMBARGOED
UNTIL 11:00am ON TUESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2008

Message from the Diocese of Lancaster:

Message begins:

Coadjutor Bishop appointed

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Fr Michael Campbell OSA coadjutor Bishop in the Diocese of Lancaster. As coadjutor he will have the right of succession, thus on the retirement of Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue in the summer of 2009, Bishop Campbell will become the sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Lancaster. On receiving news of the appointment Bishop O'Donoghue said he was "absolutely delighted to be able to welcome Bishop-elect Michael Campbell to the Diocese of Lancaster. How wonderful it is, that after many months of consultation, an appointment has been made of someone who is already known by many people in the Diocese since he worked here previously." - Fr Campbell was in fact ordained priest in the chapel of the Austin Friars School in Carlisle. Later he taught at the School, and was also the Episcopal Vicar for religious in the Diocese of Lancaster from 1990-1999. - "I am delighted that Pope Benedict acceded to my request for a coadjutor and very much look forward to welcoming Bishop-elect Campbell in person and to work with him in the ongoing task of evangelisation. The diocese of Lancaster has a proud and rich heritage of Martyrs - of witnesses to the Gospel - this work we proudly continue today. We are very blessed to have been sent this man of prayer and learning to help the Diocese become still more 'Fit for Mission'."

On hearing of his appointment Bishop-elect Campbell said: "I feel humbled and deeply touched by my appointment by Pope Benedict XVI as Coadjutor Bishop of Lancaster. It was in the Lancaster diocese that I was ordained priest and have the happiest memories of the ten years I spent working in the diocese with the late Bishop John Brewer. I have always found the Clergy, Religious and people of the diocese of Lancaster warm and friendly. In a sense I feel I am coming back home and I greatly look forward, with God's grace, to working with Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue and serving the diocese as a bishop."

Message ends

A further statement will be made as soon as more information is made available. (Containing a photograph and a brief biography of Bishop-elect Campbell)

Details of the following events will also be forwarded once dates etc have been approved.

- 1 - Bishop Campbell will be ordained Bishop in St Peter's Cathedral Lancaster: awaiting date
- 2 - Press Conference/interview with both bishops at Cathedral House

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Diocese of Lancaster covers the most of Lancashire north of the River Ribble and the whole of Cumbria to the Scottish border.
2. The present Bishop - Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue - was installed as the Fifth Bishop of Lancaster on 4th July 2001 and is due to retire in the summer of 2009 on reaching 75 years of age, a canonical requirement for all Roman Catholic bishops.
3. Fr Michael Campbell OSA . The 'OSA' after his name indicates that he is an Augustinian Friar, i.e. he belongs to a religious community, part of the Roman Catholic Church. The Augustinians, as their name implies, live their lives under the rule and spiritual inspiration of St. Augustine.

Canon Stephen Shield
Diocesan Communication Officer