

DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM

Address of the Bishop of Nottingham at His Episcopal Ordination in Saint Barnabas' Cathedral Friday 3rd July 2015

My sincere thanks go to the Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Archbishop Antonio Mennini, for his kind words and the support of the Nunciature since I first heard from him of my appointment by Pope Francis to this Diocese of Nottingham. Please kindly convey to the Holy Father the prayers of the whole Diocese for his ministry.

My grateful thanks to Cardinal Vincent for coming to ordain me and for his very fine and inspiring homily. I learnt so much from him when he was Archbishop of Birmingham. My thanks also to his chief co-consecrators, Archbishop Bernard Longley and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP. I would like to thank Archbishop Bernard for the example of leadership he has given me, for giving me such encouragement and prayerful support – and to apologise that there's the Parish of Stourbridge now to be filled! To Archbishop Malcolm, my thanks for leaving this Diocese in such good shape. I pray I may be a worthy successor, and be able to take forward the diocesan renewal programme, *You are living stones*, which you began.

And to all the other Bishops for your prayerful support here today, for your kind words of encouragement, particularly the emphasis you place on the importance of God's grace in my new ministry.

And particular thanks to Mgr Tom McGovern, who has been the Diocesan Administrator of this Diocese for the past fourteen months, for the excellent job that he and the Consultors, and so many others, have done in ensuring that the practical work and mission of the Diocese have been carried out.

To our civic guests: thank you to Sir John Peace, the Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, representing Her Majesty the Queen in this county, and to Lady Peace; your presence means so much to us all; and to Councillor Jackie Morris, the Lord Mayor of Nottingham and her escort, and Councillor Sybil Fielding, the Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, and her escort, and to members of the judiciary who are present – thank you. We as Catholics, like you, are committed to working in a variety of ways for the common good, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge your generous commitment in the service of our society.

I am delighted to welcome and to thank the Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Christopher Lowson, and the Assistant Bishop of Leicester, Bishop Christopher Boyle, and Rev Jonathan Smithhurst, representing Bishop Paul Williams, the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham, who was able to join me for Vespers last night and whose Installation as Bishop I attended last Saturday; and to all other esteemed ecumenical guests. I pray the Lord will continue to guide and inspire us to find creative ways to work together and give united witness to our love of Christ and his love for all people.

I am so pleased to see the priests, deacons and religious from the Nottingham and Birmingham dioceses. To those from Birmingham, my sincere thanks for your friendship, encouragement and fraternal support over the last 37 years – and to those from Nottingham, my thanks for the warm welcome you have given me. Long may it continue!

To parishioners from Our Lady and All Saints, Stourbridge, where I have served these past nine and a half years: my gratitude, for you have taught me so much about ministry, about openness to the Holy Spirit, about being missionary, and you have given me wonderful examples of faith lived out so generously, which has inspired and shaped me.

To all the lay men and women in the parishes, chaplaincies and schools of my new Diocese – thank you for your warm words of welcome and encouragement to me. I look forward to making my way around this geographically large Diocese and hearing of all the outreach work that is going on in service of others and in the sharing of the joy of knowing and serving Christ.

A warm welcome to those who are watching this at home, in the parish hall or in schools, and a special word to the children and young people who are watching. I very much look forward to meeting you in your parish or when I visit your school. I have learnt a lot from children and young people throughout my priestly ministry, and I know that I have a lot more to learn from you now as your Bishop.

To my family who are here – my sister Mary and brother-in-law Fintan, and my brother Willie – my gratitude for all your love and support, and I think very much today of my dearly departed mum and dad to whom I owe so much – particularly the example of deep faith, love in action, and hard work they gave me. To my sister-in-law Una and nephews and niece, Patrick, Robert and Eileen, and cousins who are unable to be here but who I know are close to me in prayer, my grateful thanks. To my many cousins and other relations who have travelled from Ireland, and to close friends and colleagues with whom I have worked, I am so happy that you have been able to be here with me. It's a great comfort to me!

Finally, I do wish to thank Fr Andrew and Canon Geoff and all the people, too numerous to mention by name, who have worked so hard to organise and prepare this Mass of Ordination, which has been so prayerful and joyful.

I look forward to meeting everyone at the reception in the Albert Hall which follows. Please pray for me, that I may be the Bishop the Lord wants me to be, and that I may therefore be always open and responsive to the promptings of his Holy Spirit. And you are in my prayers.

Rt Rev Patrick McKinney
Bishop of Nottingham